CHRIST ALONE EXALTED

In the PERFECTION and ENCOURAGEMENTS of the SAINTS, notwithstanding Sins and Trialls.

Being laid open in severall SERMONS.

By the late spirituall and faithfull Preacher of the Gospell,

*Tobias Crisp*e, D. D.

Volume III.

Psal. 71. 16. *I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousnesse, even of thine only.*

Isai. 60. 1. *Arise, shine, for thy Light is come, the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.*

LONDON,
Printed by *M. S.* for *Henry O*[illegible]
and sold at his shop in [illegible]

To all that live godly in CHRIST JESUS.

Precious Hearts,

IT is your honour above many Professors in the world to seale in your sufferings the most refreshing and ennobling truths of Christ. Your life, which is hid with Christ in God, is that spark of glory, which hath always attracted the most venemous envies of those men, who make the flesh their residence. Be confident of this, that did you live in your selves, you should live more quietly in the world; were you lower as Saints, you should be higher as Creatures. Never expect to build peaceably upon earth, while you lay not your founda-

tion in the dust : The carnall minde cannot but bee enmity against that which is the Basis *of your Principles , sutable to that expression of our Saviour,* Joh. 17. 14. The world hath hated them , because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. *It hath ever been the policy of usurpers, to keepe downe those which can justly prove their descent from the royal blood, lest they and their ill gotten glory fall together : so those that have and dis invested themselves with the titles of the Saints , presently contend for a room in the seat of the scornful, to disparage and destroy those who can cleerly shew their communion with a higher blood than their own ; where Christ doth most sweetly and cleerly reign , there the flesh will most presumptuously & cruelly tyrannize. However (Saints) though it be your Fathers pleasure, to allot you the valley of the shadow of death for your flesh to walke in, whilest your condition is in its infancy, yet know that your glorious union with the Son of God shall be more than enough in this*

this state to refresh and secure you: The world may out-run you, & come first to the top of their glory, but surely in the end, the inheritance will be yours, their first shall be last, and your last shall be first: Esau *out-wrestles* Jacob *in the womb, and comes first into the world, and according to the signification of his name, he is a great deer, a cunning hunter he was; but* Jacob *that comes forth last, takes the game;* Esau *was the first-born, but* Jacob *goes away possessed of the birth right, and blessing also. Thus doth your Father deal with you to make your latter end in brightness to outshine your beginning: Neither will your God deny you bread here in the middest of famine: Heaven rains Manna in a wildernesse, the Rock gives water in the heat of drought. Believe it (you Gospel-Christians) your beloved shal be all to you in the want of all; that possession which he hath in you, will for ever entitle you,* A Spring shut up, and a Fountain sealed, *he will be in you an everlasting head for your supply to all expences in all conditi*

ons, when the moisture of every thing below him shall be exhausted by the creatures, which suck all they have from thence, even then, and so to eternity, shall Jesus Christ be to you in the height of his fulnes. I know nothing you have that is long-lived but Jesus Christ. Earth, more grossly carnall, and Heaven, more refinedly carnall, shall passe away, even the Kingdom of Heaven, so far as it is made up of forms and administrations, shall wither and die; but the Kingdome of God within you shall never be shaken. That divine nature which hath swallowed you up, shall for ever satisfie you with variety of contentments. Let not therefore your hearts be troubled ye believe in God, believe also in Christ; you are satisfied, that the fulnes of all things dwels in God, be also convinced, that Jesus Christ, by his Fathers appointment, is made partaker of the same fulnesse: For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulnesse dwell. *Now, what ever Jesus Christ hath as Mediatour, you in your measure enjoy it; for it is the*

great

great ordinance of God, that all the Saints ſhould be ſharers and partners with Jeſus Chriſt, we are fellow citizens with him, and ſo intereſſed in the immunities and priviledges of the ſame Charter with him; that as in our firſt ſtate wee had all which Adam had, ſo alſo in our ſecond, we have all which Chriſt hath; Why then doth paleneſſe appear in your faces, and trembling ſit upon your lips? as if in the frowns of the creature all your felicity was buried. Oh remember you are one ſpirit with him, whoſe preſence is a conſtant ſpring, in a viſion of whoſe glory your beauty will be alwayes lovely. I leave it as my humble requeſt to you, that you would not forget your reſting place: For the leaſt ignorance of that will make you apprehend every condition full of anxietie: this was that which was the bottome of Iſraels *miſery*, Jer. 50. 6. They have, *ſaith the Text*, forgotten their reſting place: *Or, their place to lye down in, as the originall will bear it. If you make the creatures, or your ordinance priviledges,*

your duties, or your own righteousnesse to be your resting places, the least disturbance in the pursuit of all, or any of these will be very grievous and distracting; but if the Spirit helps you to remember him to be your rest, who is the rest of God, trouble upon any of your enjoyments below himselfe, will not have an uncomely influence upon you. To see a man fretting and vexing, that whilest hee was riding his journey, noises did keep him waking, would easily evince our reason to believe that this man had forgotten that his resting place was somewhere else: So to see you, whilest you were in your travell, discontented at that unquietnesse wherewith you are infested, would-bring you under this suspition, that you had forgotten your resting place; Israel expected beds in the wilderneſſe, when God had appointed Canaan to be their rest, & this was the ground of all their murmurings against Gods dispensations. Oh that the Spirit therefore would alwaves in the middest of sin and misery, lead you to the rocke that is higher than

your

your ſelves or any thing you eſteeme above your ſelves. Many times they create troubles, ſo alſo create remedies, even ſuch wch God never ſealed: many times we ſin, and then endeavour to make uſe of ſin for a cure: we break a command of God, and then cal upon ſome duty or other to ſow Chriſt, to make up that breach; and thus we bring a double pain and vexation upon our ſelves. When a wound is made by a weapon, a contrary plaiſter applied, makes it more uncapable of cure then it was before: So it is with all diſtempers in your ſoules, by reaſon of ſin; if you look upon any beſide the brazen Serpent, your diſtemper will returne with double vigour upon you. But certainly, one viſion of Jeſus Chriſt will bid defiance to the ſtouteſt of your luſts, and all the powers of darkneſſe combined with them, and in an encounter will more than conquer them. The Hoſt of Iſrael was very great, & well prepared for the battel, but if ever the day be won, David muſt come into the field. Our faſtings and prayers appeare a huge Hoſt, but they will rather gaze upon, than

ingage

ingage against an enemie, if Jesus Christ be not in the field; but the very countenance of Jesus Christ doth soon kill the enemie & the avenger, and makes all this issue of sin in the soul, to prove abortive. The marrow of all this you have clearly laid open in the demonstration of the Spirit, in the following Sermons, which I am confident, to all that are led by the Spirit, will be a full vindication of the truth of Christ, and of the worthy Author from those base aspersions cast upon him, by pride & ignorance. You shall finde the summe of this work, to be the sole exaltation of the Lord Jesus in Saints and duties, and the debasing and trampling upon all flesh that shall aspire to the seat of Christ, the reviving and encouraging of drooping hearts, by presenting Christ, not themselves, in all his accomplishments to them. Now, if the world shall baptize this doctrine Antinomianisme, the Lord grant that all the doctrine preached throughout the world, may deservedly be called by that name. Ye that know Christ, be not afraid, notwithstand-

in

rising all the censures of the world, to reade
the book, and receive the truth; be assured
it is not presented to thee as a bait, which
is an introduction to a snare, but if the
Spirit of Jesus accompany it, thou wilt cer-
tainly say, as Christ did, I have meate to
eat which ye know not of. I should ra-
ther cloud the work, then honour it, if I
should proceed to a further commendation
of it. I leave it therefore to the Spirit to
make out the worth of it to the spirits of
the Saints, and am concluded under this
faith, that all the malice and carnall wis-
dome of this generation shall never be able
to interrupt the course of it. As for the
Author, though hee was never known to
me, yet those works of his which I have per-
used, do encourage me to believe that whilst
he lived in the world, he lived in God, and
now his earthly tabernacle being dissolved
he is taken up into that fulnesse which hee
only saw in part whilst he lived here; and
though whilst he was upon earth, it might
be his portion with his Lord and Master
to bee mocked and buffeted in the High

Priests

Priests hall, yet now sits with him in the fruition of that glory for which he was then a sufferer. What now remains, but that you which through the Spirit have tasted the sweetness of his Ministry in the same spirit, look up to your Father, and beg of him that those who survive in the worke of the Gospel, may goe on where he left, & in the plentifull effusion of the Spirit, the glorious truths of Christ may bee amongst the Saints, as the Sun in his height; and amongst the rest, forget not him (though unworthy to be numbred with them) who is ambitious of nothing else, but to be

All in Christ, and
nothing in self,

Geo. Cokain.

To the impartial READER.

READER,

TRUTH needs no ſhield to ſhelter it; her o[wn] bare breaſts are armor of proof againſt all daring darts of ignorance and pride; and therefore walks fearleſſe in the midſt of all thoſe vollies of bitter words: who ever vaunts in putting on his harneſs? Truth only triumphs in putting it off; this never quits the field without the Garland: God that calleth to the combat, carrieth on with a conquering hand; the gates of hell aſſault, but prevail not: wee can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth. The Prince of the air muſters up his forces, and retreats; his blacke guard falls on with him, and are ſhametully beate back, kings, with their armies flie before it; the powers of darkneſs, like *Jehu*, march againſt it, furiouſly they attempt—ſtorm: but a the brightneſs that is before this Sun, the thick clouds remove; one of truth ſubverts

ſubverts the tents of darkneſſe. What is ſtronger than truth, whose going out is as the morning, & riſeth up to a glorious day? That ancient Empſeme is a true Image of truth: a candle in a lanthorn, upon an high hill, beſeaguered with temperatious blaſts, hangs out the flag of defiance, with this Motto, *Fruſtrà*. It is but loſt labour, to dig a trench about that city for which the Lord hath appointed ſalvation for walls and bulwards; but though it be ſecured from ſubverſion, yet it is not protected frō oppoſition: You know how it went with Chriſt; was not his cradle cut out of the ſame wood, of which his croſſe was made? His firſt entrance upon the ſtage of this world portended a black day at his departing: his ſudden flight into *Egypt* from *Herods* barbarous jealouſie, was but the Prologue to that ſad Tragedy which he ended on *Mount-Calvary*; nor may his children or ſervants expect better entertainment; bonds or afflictions, or both, abide them that are faithfull; they have called the Maſter an impoſtor, or glutton, *Beelzebub*; Is the ſervant above his Lord? I know this ſervant of truth hath had his ſhare in ſuffering for it; envious men purſue thoſe that out-goe them: a Phariſee will ſtone any, even Chriſt, that ſhall preſume to teach them beyond their old divinity. Much dirty geer hath been caſt upon the

Author

Author of this book, which, if it could have faſtned on him, I were (by ſpeciall ingagements) bound to wipe it off; but a falſe tongue cannot make a guilty perſon: *Rabſhekah's* railing made no breach in *Jeruſalems* wals. Chriſt alone muſt be exalted, and all fleſh made his foot-ſtool.

But there bee ſome that ſeeke to darken the wiſdome of God with the words of men, and draw a ſpecious vail over divine myſteries, that ſo (it may be not intentionally) underſtanding is hid from the ſimple; theſe make a fair ſhew in the fleſh. But I had rather ſee the King in his plaineſt cloaths, then his fool in a painted coat. Where is the Scribe? where is the wiſe? where is the diſputer of this world? The loftineſſe of man muſt be laid low, his glory buried in the duſt, all his perfections come to an end: but if thou deſireſt to ſee truth in a comely dreſſe, & cleer complexion, thou maiſt have a full view thereof in this enſuing Diſcourſe. Say not the Treatiſe is too ſmal to contain ſo vaſt a ſubject, but rather admire his skill that diſcovers ſo much of heaven through ſo ſmal a proſpective. Wee applaud their art that contract the wide world into the narrow compaſſe of a ſlender Map: What a deal of worth is in a little Diamond? How do men prize the duſt of gold? Deſpiſe not ſmall things; ſay not 'tis a little

book;

book; a itle ſtarre may light thee to Chriſt; great bodies have moſt humours; groſſer volumes commonly are thickned with too much earth. If thou ask what is in this? I anſwer, as the voyce once ſpake to *Auſtin*, *Tolle*, *Lege*: or as *Philip* to *Nathaniel*; *Come and ſee*. If I ſhould ſay all that I know of the Author, ſome that know me, would ſay that I flatter him, becauſe of my relation to him in his life, though I know there's little to be gotten by dead mens favour. But this I ſhall bee bold to affirm, there's no *Antinomianiſme* in the Title or Tract; and from all vicious licentiouſneſſe of life, and ſcandalous aſperſions caſt on his perſon by lying lips, I ſtand upon mine owne experience, and more than twelve yeers knowledge to vindicate him; let the father of lies, and all his brood come forth and make good their charge againſt him. I fear not to appear in his cauſe; yea, if I ſhould not open my mouth in his behalfe, whoſe induſtry and integrity, God and his Saints have ſo much approved, and from whoſe labours and yokefellow I have reaped ſo much comfort, if yet I ſhould be ſilent, I deſire to be marked with a black coal.

Try him now, and judge, thou wilt find no poiſon in his hive; no Serpent lurks under his leaves; *Tolle, lege*, come, and ſee whether Jeſus

of

of *Nazareth* be not here; not ſealed up in a Sepulchre, & guarded with a rude traine to keep his Diſciples from him, as the High Prieſts uſe to do; but thou ſhalt find him in his garden, opening his fountaine, blowing on his ſpices, leading into his banqueting-houſe, ſtaying with flaggons, comforting on every ſide: thou ſhalt find more in this booke then I will promiſe; only be perſwaded to peruſe it; if thou loveſt thy reſt, read it: Here is newes of drye land, footing for thy ſoul, the Olive branch doth witneſſe it; feare not, be not diſmayed; the waters are abated; let not thy ſloth make thee guilty of thy miſery. Will not the weather-beaten Marriner employ all his ſtrength and oars to thruſt into a quiet harbour? Is any thing more deſired by the chaſed Hart, then the cooling ſtreams? How do men, purſued by the enemie, rejoyce in the ſhelter of a ſtrong hold? Can any thing be more welcome to a notorious offender, juſtly condemned, then a gracious pardon? Is not God and his Righteouſneſſe all this, and much more to a poor creature in ſuch conditions? Behold, an Haven, a Brooke, a Tower, a Pardon, a full, a free Pardon, a Ranſome for thy ſoule; the righteouſneſſe of God breaking through the ſides, the hands, the heart of Chriſt, to make way to thee, to revive thy dying, droop-

ing, bleeding heart. Incline thine ear, hearken for the time to come; hear, and thy ſoul ſhall live; forſake not thine owne mercies, to obſerve lying vanities; leane not to the reeds of *Egypt*, when thou haſt the rod of Gods ſtrength put into thy hand: Shal there be a price in the hand, and no heart to it? It may be thy feet have not yet ſtumbled, though thou haſt walked on the hils of earth, the Mountains of the world, the high Mountains of the fleſh, thy way hath beene ſmooth and eaſie; ſo is the wilde Aſſe's till her moneth overtake her: thy conſcience, perhaps, hath fancied ſome ſhadow of peace by the dull glimmering of an earthly ſpark: but they that walk in the light at laſt lye downe in ſorrow, *Iſaiah* 50. 11.

Be not proud therefore, but give glory to God, before he cauſe darkneſſe, before he turn your light into the ſhadow of death, & make it groſſe darkneſſe; that darkneſſe that might be felt, was not the leaſt of the *Egyptian* plagues: What greater torment then the conſcience once ſenſible of being deſtitute of the light of life? The Authors aim is to lead thee into *Guſhen*, to guide thy feet into the way of peace; follow him, walke in the ſteps of the faith of our Father *Abraham*; that faith, of which circumciſion was no cauſe, nor evidence

to himself; for he had it, and he knew he had it, before he was circumcised; by this faith he gave glory to God, we give glory to the robe of Gods righteousnesse, when we put none of our owne under it to make it sit uneasie, nor weare any of our own upon it, to obscure the full glory of it, thou wilt finde this garment the best fashion, and as wel held forth by this, as by any man, whose intentions were to cover all blemishes, all sins, to hide all deformity with it; yet to shelter no lust, nor sin under it. I might launch out into his life, and call in all his practice to prove it; but till more need require, I shall referre thee to Mr. *R. L.* in his preface to the first volume, and to the present triall of his doctrine. Let a Christian heart moderate a critical eye, & find fault who can. The God that once breathed the rich knowledg of himselfe through the frail organs of this earthen vessel, into the eares of those that heard him, now dart a greater glory of his righteousnesse and grace into the eyes of all their understandings that shall read him.

I know I can adde no worth to this work; 'tis of divine value, it hath the stamp of heaven, the Image of God is on it; the Author is gone home, and yet living with the Lord, though some think the Saints dye, and like the wicked, leave a stink behind them. I deny not

the mortality of any, nor need I hang this mans hearse with odoriferous Encomiums: yet hee that visits his friend, though never so godly, in the grave, had need take a little Frankincense in his hand, if hee be buried among men; all the aire in the world is so contagiously infected with the stinking breath of the living, that you cannot come neer the dead without a bundle of myrrhe. Malice and madnesse, like a *Gangrena*, stands at the tombe and tent of every blessed soul, crying, *Noli me tangere*. Of all men, one would have thought so sweet a man as Christ, had needed no spices in his Sepulchre; for hee did no evill, and he saw no corruption; Yet *Joseph* would not inter his body without sweet odors, though *Mary* had bestowed a whole boxe of precious oyntment on his feet in his life time, but a little before his buriall. Let the Saints walke never so wisely, warily, circumspectly; let them keep their feet as clean, as sweet as they can, they had need have their winding sheet and coffin perfumed; I say not with the Parasiticall smoke of a perfumed Oration, but with a just vindication of their innocency, as occasion shall require. But I hope there will be need of no engagement from me this way in the Authors behalf: for his two last Sermons in this volume are a cleer vindication of him from those co-

m

men aſperſions laid upon him and the doctrine he preached, which for that reaſon amongſt others, are now come into the world before their full growth, the Author being taken away before he could bring forth all his conceptions in the purſuite of thoſe two ſubjects; which we deſire the Reader candidly to accept as the laſt breathings forth of the Spirit in that precious Saint whileſt hee was below. But if this ſtops not the mouth of envie, I ſhall not thinke any coſt too great to raiſe up & continue the memory of truths favorites and friends; nor eſteeme any labour too much, whereby I may approve my ſelfe the friend and ſervant of Je-Chriſt Jeſus and his Church, otherwiſe then which (by Gods grace) thou ſhalt never finde,

The ſubject of Chriſt, and
ſervant of his Saints,

Henry Pinnell.

A brieſe Table of the Heads of theſe SERMONS.

SERMON I.

UPON Iſaiah 41.10. Fear not, for I am with thee; be not diſmayed, for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee; yea, I wil help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſſe. *p.* 1

Wherein are obſerved:

Firſt, the temper of ſpirit God aims to reduce them to, not to fear. page 11

Wherein,

I. *What it is not to fear, or be diſmayed.* p. 13

II. *What it is we muſt not feare nor be diſmayed at.* p. 18

1 *Not our ſins explained and proved* p. 19

2 *Not the ſins of others.* p. 27

3 *Not afflictions or chaſtiſements.* p. 29

4 *Not men.* p. 31

1 *Not their wrath.* p. 32

2 *Not their policie.* p. 33

3 *Not their inſtruments of cruelty.* 34

III. *What*

III. *What are the fruits or disadvantages by fearfulnesse:*

1 *In respect of God; which are, that it casts slanders,*

1 *Upon the power of God.* p. 40

2 *Upon his faithfulnesse.* p. 41

3 *Upon his care & providence.* p. 42

4 *Upon his free grace.* p. 43

5 *Upon the sufferings of Christ.* p. 44

2 *In respect of Gods service.*

1 *By weakening faith.* p. 45

2 *By damping all other religious services, as prayer,* &c. p. 45

SERMON II.

Secondly, the course the Lord takes to reduce them to this temper of spirit, as to be free from fear & dismayednesse, which is by proposing to them the motives in the Text, I am thy God, &c.

Where are observed,

1 *What it is for God to be thy God.* p. 62 *wherein the faithfull propriety in God is largely explained in generall.*

2 *What he hath, who hath God for his. Where his treasure is looked upon:* 72

1 *In regard of the quality, or worth of it.* p. 74

2 *In regard of the vertue of it.* p. 75

3 *In the universality and variety of the*

the uſefulneſſe of it. P. 76

3 *By anſwering ſeverall Objections, is ſhewed how it is ſo well with thoſe that are the Lords by their intereſt in this treaſure, notwithſtanding ſome appearances to the contrary beginning.* p. 78

4 *How God doth become their God, and upon what terms.* Anſw. *Freely from Gods own good pleaſure in Chriſt.* p. 88

5 *How God is found or known to be the God of his people.* Anſw.

1 *By the Spirit of God as the efficient.* P. 93

2 *By faith as the paſſive inſtrument; laying hold upon the word of grace. Subordinately in Prayer, and other Ordinances.* P. 94

SERMON III.

VPON 1 John 2. 1, 2. My little children, theſe things I write unto you, that you ſin not: and if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins, & not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world. *Herein obſerve,*

1 *Firſt, the connexion of theſe words:* Theſe things I write, that ye ſin not; *where this point is offered.*

Doct. That

Doct. *That the knowledge of Propitiation and forgiveneſſe, is the ſtrongeſt meanes to reſtrain ſin.* p. 106.

This is,

1 *Proved from* p. 106 *by Scriptures at large.*

2 *Objections anſwered, from* p. 119 *to the end.*

SERM. IV.

2 *The words themſelves; wherein four generall heads are conſidered.*

I. *What it is for Chriſt to be an Advocate, and how he doth manage it.* p. 152

Anſw.

1 *Aduocateſhip is an office to plead the indemnity of the client in a way of Juſtice, Chriſt having made ſatisfaction unto Juſtice.* p. 153

SERM. V.

2 *He manageth his Advocateſhip by his interceſſion or continuall repreſentation of his ſatisfaction, as Alſufficient for us.* p. 169, &c.

II. *Whoſe cauſe it is that Chriſt doth undertake to be an Advocate for.*

Anſw.

1 *For all Believers at all times.* 173

2 *Yea,*

2 Yea, *for all the elect in some degree, though they be for the present in a state of unbelief.* p. 175

III. *How Christ is gifted or qualified for this office of advocateship.* p. 181

Answ. *He is,*

First, *Christ.*

Secondly, *Jesus.*

Thirdly, *The Righteous.*

1 *He is Christ, that is, anointed, which imports*

1 *That hee is authorized and called to this office.* p. 182

2 *That he is sufficiently gifted thereunto.* p. 185

2 *He is Jesus, i.e. Certainly saving those he pleads for.* p. 187

SERM. VI.

3 *Hee is the righteousnesse; hence is observed:*

1 *That all the strength of Christs plea consists in his Righteousnes.* p. 197

2 *What this Righteousnesse is.*

1 *Negatively:*

Not the righteousnesse of our workes. p. 221

2 *Not the righteousnesse of faith*

faith it self as acted by us, and inherent in us. p. 214

SERM. VII.

3 *How especially is shewed, that justification in the Court of heaven, is before faith.* p. 225

2 *Positively, The visible office of Christ as Mediator, God and man.* p. 238

That is,

1 *His active obedience.* 239

2 *His passive obedience.* 241

3 *There is an accesse of value comming hereunto by the dignity of the person, being God as well as man.* p. 243

SERM. VIII.

4 *An Objection; that faith is said to be our coming to Christ, therefore there can be no union before it: which is at large answered from* p. 258. *to the end.*

SERM. IX.

IV. *What it is for Christ to be the Propitiation for*

for the sins of the people. p. 288

1 *Explained first in its type;*

It is to have him for our Mercy-seate: where,

1 *Where only the incense of our services being offered, are acceptable.* p. 290

2 *Where the Scape-goatis prepared, that hath carried all our sinnes into a land of forgetfulnesse.* p. 291

3 *Where God returneth all his gracious answers to us.* p. 291

2 *In its own nature being the same with Atonement, or Reconciliation.* p. 292 *to the end.*

SERMON X.

UPON Solomons Sol. 4. 10. Thou art all fair my Love and there is no spot in thee:

Herein,

1 *He digresseth by way of Apologie, to cleer himself from some slanders or imputations cast upon him.* page 322. As,

1 *The first slander, that we have affirmed that the righteousnesse of Christ, as God-man, was not sufficient to make a compleat righteousness* p. 322

2 That

2 That he had denyed Christ, by denying faith and repentance. p.325
3 That he should affirme, that an elect person might live and die an Whoremonger, an Adulterer, and in all kind of prophanenesse. p.326
All which hee utterly renounceth as false and slanderous. ibid.
2 He returneth to the Text; wherein is observed;
That the Church is the Spouse of Christ; and this great grace is set forth in 2. things;
1 In the consideration of the great inequality of the persons matched. p.328
2 The manifold priviledges that come by this match or relation; as,
1 We thereby become the sonnes of God. p.335
2 Wee are thereby made joynt heirs with Christ. ibid.
3 We hereby partake with Christ in all his honours. ibid.
4 The Spouse of Christ is hereby freed from arrest. ibid.

SERMON XI.

VPON Colos. 1. 18. He is the head of the body the beginning. pags 337.
Wherein is considered:
1 Who

1 *Who this is that is the head.* p. 343
Who is described
1 *By his divine nature and Godhead* 344
2 *By his eternall personality.* p. 345
3 *By his distinct humane nature.* p. 346
4 *By the personall union of his divine & humane nature together.* Ibid.
5 *By the mysticall union, whereby Christ God-man, is united with his body the Church.* p. 346
2 *What this office of Headship imports.* 348
Namely,
1 *That Christ is the beginning of the being of his Church.* pag. 349
2 *He is the beginning of all the priviledges & prerogatives of the Church.* page 357

Reader

GODS COVENANT with his People, the ground of their ſecurity.

SERMON I.

Iſaiah 41. Verſ. 10.

Feare not, for I am with thee; be not diſmayed, for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee; yea, I will helpe thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſſe.

IN the former part of this *Chapter*, (which we will ſpeake a little of, becauſe it will make way to the diſcovery of the true ſcope of this Text) you ſhall finde the Lord graciouſly acquainting his people, concerning his minde, in ſending Chriſt into the world, and what tumults this ſending of Chriſt ſhould raiſe; how the Lord repell'd that out-

cry; what ſucceſſe he giveth unto this Chriſt raiſed up in ſpite of all the malignity and force raiſed againſt his power and glory.

And it is worth your obſervation, beloved, to conſider how the Lord doth manifeſt this as a Preamble to this very Text. In the firſt verſe of this *Chapter*, the Lord ſeems to repreſent unto us the malignity of the world, under the name of *Ilands and the people*; and to preſent them in ſuch like poſture, as *Demetrius* and his fellows ſtood in, in his time, in the 19th. of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, upon *Pauls* ſetting up of Chriſt, there was a horrible tumult raiſed in that particular againſt the Doctrine of Chriſt: ſo is ſeems, the *Ilands* and the *people*, were in ſuch a kinde of poſture here; therefore the Lord is pleaſed to call for ſilence: *Keepe ſilence before mee, yee Ilands*; ſuch a noyſe there was, as I may ſay, that God could not be heard; and therefore firſt hee requires ſilence, and then, inſtead of that confuſion that was among them, in reſpect of their madneſſe; hee deſires them to deale ſomewhat rationally with him, hee chargeth the world to put out all the ſtrength it hath, *Bring forth your ſtrongeſt reaſons, Let them come neere, and let us reaſon together in judgement.* Now, that which the Lord ſpeakes, is as intending to heare what they could ſay for themſelves in their oppoſition of Chriſt; for ſee

you

you ſee plainly in the ſecond verſe there, when the Lord had got ſilence, hee pleads the cauſe of Chriſt, by way of expoſtulation, as if hee had ſaid: what madneſſe is it in you, to ſet your faces againſt this ſetting up of Chriſt? *For who hath raiſed up the righteous man, and called him to his feete, and given him to rule over Kings?* Why doe you contend in this manner? can you tell who it is that ſets him up? If yee did but know againſt whom ye riſe up, it would appeare to your ſelves to be a vain contention; And therefore in the fourth verſe of this *Chapter*, he anſwers the queſtion himſelfe, and therein ſhewes the vanity of their oppoſing him. *For*, ſaith he, *the Lord hath done it, who is the firſt, and who is the laſt.* If you fight with me, what will you get by it? Be ye ſure, I will manage the thing, it is the worke of mine owne hands, and it is I that raiſe him up, even to rule over Kings. and therefore you doe but kick againſt the pricks, in your contending with me.

The Lord proceeds further, to ſhew the certainty of the prevalency of Chriſt, in the latter end of the ſecond verſe, and in the third verſe, he goes on, to let us ſee the facillity of Chriſts prevalency, and not onely the facillity, but alſo the extent of the prevalency of Chriſt, both how eaſily, and how far he ſhould prevaile.

This matter is of excellent consideration, *He shall pursue*, saith the Text, and he shall passe on *safely*, or, as it is in the margent, *he shall passe on in peace*, as much as to say, when Christ takes upon him to set up his owne Kingdome and glory in the world, every one that sets his face against him, shall flye before him, and Christ will be the pursuer, and in the pursuit, he will so overtake them in the flight, that they shall be easily destroyed. Therefore Christ shall run quietly and softly, he shall not run after them too hastily, there shall be such softnesse in the pursuit of Christ, that the overcomming of the opposers shall seem to be a time of peace, there shall be such little opposition of him.

In the fifth verse, the Lord goes on, and tells of the fruit of this conquest, and the victory Christ shall have when he comes to reign in his Church: the first fruit of it, is terror to them that set their faces against the Kingdome of Christ, *the Ilands were afraid*: Secondly, the Lord shewes what an ill use they made of this feare, whereas it should make them stoop to the Scepter of Christ that was too hard for them: like malefactors indeed, when they saw themselves overmastered, they assembled, and gathered themselves together, they hoped to raise up more forces, and then they will try it out once more againe with Christ. Besides, you

may

may obſerve, what a politike, devilliſh practice they uſe, to bring downe Chriſt againe when he was raiſed, that which hath been the main and grand plot of Satan, even to raiſe up Idols, and ſet them up by Chriſt, to ſteale away the hearts of people. It was the policy of *Balaam*, counſelling *Balak* to lay ſtumbling blockes before *Iſrael*, to intice them unto the Idols of *Moab*; and it was the counſell of *Jeroboam* to overthrow the Kingdome of Chriſt, to ſet up Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, that ſo there may not be a going unto Chriſt. So you have it in the ſeventh verſe; *The Carpenter incouraged the Goldſmith*, &c. Well, the Lord having thus diſcovered what oppoſition there would be, at the ſetting up of Chriſt; begins to ſpeake ſomewhat comfortably unto his owne, giving incouragement to his own people: the oppoſition indeed of the world never ſtirs, nor moves God; becauſe he know well enough how he can blaſt every attempt: yet, becauſe he knowes that his people have ſome fleſh remaining ſtill in them, the appearance of a tumult, and the oppoſition of the Goſpell may, peradventure, put them into an affright. The Lord therefore endeavours to hearten his own people, againſt the frights that they might take, in regard of the outward appearance of oppoſition: and this he doth in the words of the Text: *Feare thou not, for I am*

with thee : bee not dismayed , for I am thy God.

Now, lest there should be a mistake to whom the Lord directs this speech ; for the intent of the Lord may be mistaken in the extent of the people to whom hee speakes ; and therefore in the 8. and 9. verses, the Lord shews to whom he speaks such incouragements : *But thou Israel art my servant, and Jacob, whom I have chosen, the seed of* Abraham *my friend.*

Object. Why some will say, It seemes then that in this Text, Gods speaking of comfort, and encouragement, is confined onely unto the people of the *Jews* that are the children of *Jacob*, and the seede of *Abraham*, and therefore what ever comfort there is in the Text, there is little comfort belongs unto us ?

Answ. Consider the ninth verse, and then it will appear, that though God speakes of *Jacob*, *Israel*, and the seed of *Abraham*, yet he doth not speak of the seed according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit ; for in the ninth verse, you read the words thus : *Thou whom I have chosen, and taken from the ends of the earth.* That *Jacob* then, and *Israel*, to whom the Lord speakes these comfortable words, is the *Jacob* and *Israel* that is called from the ends of the earth. Now, if you would know what is meant by *the ends of the earth*, the Prophet will tell you , in

chap.

chap. 43. of *Iſaiah* and the 5,6,7. verſes, *Feare not, for I am with thee, I will bring thy ſeed from the Eaſt, and gather thee from the Weſt; I will ſay to the North, Give up, and to the South, Keepe not back: bring my Sonnes from farre, and my Daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name.* As much as to ſay, this *Iſrael* and *Jacob*, to whom the Lord ſpeaks, not to feare, is a people gathered from the Eaſt, and from the North, and from the South, and from the Weſt; now the ſeed of *Jacob* naturally conſidered, is not of that extent, as to over-ſpread the World every way, however, the laſt clauſe, that it is, *even every one that is called by his name*, puts it out of doubt, that it extends alſo to us *Gentiles*.

This I note, beloved, that ſo we may not only have a gueſſe that the comfortable language frequently mentioned by the Prophet, belongeth unto us, as wel as the *Jews*: but that we may ſee that it is the mind of the Lord, that he hath revealed it himſelf, that it doth indeed extend it ſelf unto us; for, by the way, ſolid comfort wil not be raiſed upon meer gueſſes or preſumptions, taking things for granted, without the ſenſe of a good foundation to bear up ſuch comforts. All the comfort people have, when they runne upon gueſſes, is onely abiding with them ſo long as there is not adminiſtred an

occasion of discomfort. But all the comforts in the world will vanish that have not some firme foundation when they are struck at, and when some tempest beats against them, to cast them downe. And therefore it is good to bee established in every truth wherein comfort may be received.

Now, from this passage, as it hath reference to the coherence, I may observe unto you, that, When ever the Lord Jesus Christ is set up in freshnesse, and glory, and beauty, he doth alwayes meet with strong opposition: I say, the Lord Christ, that righteous Man, was never raised up, but a storme was raised with him; there is an everlasting fighting against the glorious light of Christs Gospel, when ever it breakes out. You may see the truth of this, beloved, especially since Christs personall coming at all times: no sooner did the Apostles begin to preach Christ, as raised from the dead, but a madnesse and a fury grew upon those that thought themselves in authority, as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; their swords were presently drawn, their prisons set open to clap up those that preached Christ; *Herod* killed one, imprisoned another, intending to kill him too. Beloved I need say little of this, your owne experience may now be a sufficient witnesse of that which, perhaps, you feared long before. Now

is

is come the time of reformation, and purging of the Church, the time is come of ſetting up the Ark, and bringing *Dagon* down: you ſee the fruit of this, you ſee what combuſtions this hath raiſed in the world: let Chriſt himſelf be never ſo peaceable, yet when he comes, men will picke a quarrell with him; therefore by the way, as it is a truth in generall, ſo is it in particular caſes too: When ever we the Miniſters of the Goſpel, devote our ſelves only to ſet up Chriſt, and labour might and maine upon this worke, we muſt expect to have the world about our eares. And for you, beloved, if you dreame of peace and reſt in the world, if you dreame of finding of friendſhip and amity, and applauſe with men, while you endeavour to ſet up the Lord Chriſt, you miſtake your ſelves exceedingly. You muſt looke for uproars, and tumults, and clamours from the world, and there will be theſe continually attending you.

In the ſecond place, from the coherence, you may obſerve, As mad and deſperate as the world is, and the enemies of Chriſt are in fighting and making oppoſition againſt Chriſt; yet no weapons formed in this kinde ſhall proſper. *The Lord hath raiſed him up*, ſaith the Text, *and he ſhall rule over the Heathen, and they ſhall bee as duſt before his ſword, and as driven ſtubble before his bow.* I ſay, this ſhall come to paſſe, and there-

fore

fore it is no great matter how majestically the world lookes, and how mighty it makes it selfe, for, beloved, if all the World should combine against one person, that stands for the cause of Christ, rather than Christ should sinke, this person should bee able to withstand even the whole World. But however, let that person bee borne downe to the ground, or over-borne with the World, Christ shall never be over-borne, Christ shall reign in glory, and triumph, not onely in Heaven, but also in his Church too: When all comes to all, let them fight never so desperately, Christ shall bee the conqueror, he shall purtue, nay, he shall passe on softly; hee shall not neede to take any great pains, nor toile, to maintaine himself thus set up, and destroy his enemies, hee shall doe it with ease.

But this is not that I meane neither; I come therefore to the Text it selfe: The Text is a word of incouragement, or a word of heartening, held forth to those spirits that are subject to faint and droop, in respect of the afflictions that are likely, or at least seeme to be likely to grow upon the Church of Christ; *Feare not, be not dismayed, I am thy God, I am with thee.*

In the words, there are two generalls very remarkable and observable:

First, the temper of the spirit that the Lord aims

aimes to reduce his people unto.

Secondly, the courſe the Lord takes to reduce them thereunto.

The temper of ſpirit that the Lord deſires to reduce his people unto, is delivered in a double expreſſion; *Feare not; bee not diſmayed.* They are both one, ſaving that diſmayedneſſe is the higheſt extremity of feare; ſo then the temper that he endeavours to reduce them unto, is a quietneſſe, and ſettledneſſe, and undauntednеſſe of ſpirit.

Secondly, the courſe that God takes to bring them to this temper of ſpirit, is a propoſall of motives and arguments of ſufficient effect, and prevalency to pull down vain feare out of the heart; *Feare not, for I am thy God; I am with thee*, and ſo forth. The reſult of the Text is briefly this: They need never to be affraid, nor diſmayed at any thing, though it appeare never ſo hideous, who have God for their God, and preſent with them, and a help unto them. Beloved, theſe are times, as I hinted before unto you, that require ſuch a cordial as this, now mentioned unto you: For now in a more eminent way then ever before, is the glory of the Kingdome of Chriſt conteſted againſt, and attempted to be thrown down to the duſt. Now, when wee heare of evills, our hearts are ſubject to be diſmayed, and eſpecially when wee ſee them with

our

our eyes; the ſword is drawne, nay, blood is drawne, the hearts of men are full of faintings, and many almoſt at their wits ends; many begin to ſuſpect what will become of things, out of the fainting & ſuſpicion of their ſpirits. And therefore now, now it is time to bring forth, out of the treaſures of the Lord, that, that may ſtay the ſpirits of the people of God; that is, ſuch an incouragement as the Lord himſelfe gives, which will be the beſt way in the world to eſtabliſh our hearts: namely, when God will ſay to a ſoule, *Feare not, be not diſmayed; for I am thy God*: it is a cup of conſolation indeed. And that wee may draw it forth to you, with the better advantage for you to drinke deepe of it, let us take theſe particulars into conſideration:

Firſt, what it is, *not to feare, nor to be diſmayed.*

Secondly, what it is, that wee muſt not *feare* and be *diſmayed* at.

Thirdly, what the fruite of *fear*, or *diſmayedneſſe* is, or what prejudice or diſadvantage *feare*, or *diſmayedneſſe* brings along with them.

Fourthly, wee ſhall then conſider the motives of the Lord, to take us off from theſe diſtempers of *feare*, and *diſmayedneſſe*; namely, becauſe God is our God; and in that wee ſhall conſider.

Firſt,

Firſt, what it is for God to be thy God.

Secondly, we ſhall conſider, what ſtrength there is in this Argument, God being thy God, how this takes off fear and diſmayedneſſe. And,

Thirdly, ſeeing there is ſuch ſtrength in this Argument, we ſhall conſider how God doth become the God of perſons and people, that ſo you may ſee the way to enter into this priviledge to have God for your God, and ſo to bee ſecured from fear and diſmayedneſſe.

To begin with the firſt, what it is for a perſon not to feare, nor be diſmayed. I have obſerved concerning all the paſſions and affections of men, that the ſenſe of them far better open their nature, then any diſcourſe poſſibly can. When a fit of feare, eſpecially when the height of diſmayedneſſe it ſelfe ſeizes upon a ſpirit, that ſpirit may read a playner lecture to it ſelf of that Paſſion, then all the Rhetorick of men in the world can expreſſe; I mean, fear is ſuch a paſſion, as every one knowes better by thoſe experiments they have of it, what it is, then another is poſſible able to diſcribe. It is a very diſtracting, diſturbing, confounding paſſion; it is a kinde of beſotting paſſion, that makes men loſe themſelves, eſpecially, if it be in the extremity of feare, It ariſes from an apprehenſion of ſome unavoidable, inſupportable evill growing upon a perſon, and occaſioned

sioned either by some symptomes of that evill, or by some messenger or other relating it, or by some foresight of the evill in the eye. Now, as evill appears greater or lesser, and more or lesse tolerable, so the passion of feare, is more or lesse in persons. In brief, I will give you but a touch of the nature of this passion, and you shall have it delivered to you in the words of the *Psalmist*, where he sets it forth by its contrary, by what it is not to be afraid, or not to be dismayed, in 112 *Psalme* the 7. and 8. *verses*, the *Psalmist* hath divers expressions, that plainly shew, what it is for a person not to bee affraid, *Hee shall not bee moved*, saith hee, *his heart is fixed, hee shall not be afraid; his heart is established.* Marke the phrases, and in them you shall have a full Lecture read to you of a heart not affraid nor dismayed. First, it is a heart that is not moved nor stirred: suppose evill grows on, it may bee the sword, the enemy appeares bigger and bigger; still the dangers are greater and greater; what is it now not to be affraid? It is not to be moved at all at any time; so farre forth as the appearance of danger moves the heart, or turnes it, so farre hee is affraid. So the other phrase doth import, *His heart is fixed.* You know, that feare in the heart, is oftentimes expressed by the shaking and trembling of it; and therefore the Holy Ghost expresseth

preſſeth it alſo by the ſhaking of the tops of trees, ſo it cauſeth an unſtedfaſtneſſe of ſpirit. Now ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *they ſhall not be affraid, whoſe hearts are fixed*, that is, as a poſt that is ſet deep in the ground, and rammed in, ſtands faſt, ſo that if you thruſt againſt it, it ſtirs not, it is fixed: ſo when any thing beats againſt the heart to ſhake it, and to overthrow it, when the heart of a man ſtirs not at it, it is a fixed heart, and is not affraid. And ſo the phraſe that followes; *his heart is eſtabliſhed*, ſignifieth that it is made a ſtable and firm heart, ſo that it cannot bee ſhaken. In briefe, to have a heart not affraid nor diſmayed, is to have a heart calm, that lookes with a regardleſſe eye, as I may ſay, upon evills when they doe grow out. You ſhall ſee beloved, this affection or temper of ſpirit, *not to be affraid*, in that ſenſe I mention, excellently deſcribed unto you in the third of *Daniel*, and the 16. *verſe*, and there, when ever you would know whether you be affraid or no you ſhall find alwayes as in a Lecture, the thing diſcovered unto you. You know what danger was in the eies of thoſe three children, *Shadrach*, *Meſhach* and *Abednigo*, there was a hot fiery furnace prepared for them, ſeven times hotter than ordinary: the King proclaimes that whatever he be that will not fall down and worſhip his Image, ſhould preſently be caſt into this furnace:

nace : This was enough to ſtartle a perſon, and make him tremble. But how is the temper of the three children expreſſed there? *We are not,* ſay they, *carefull to anſwer thee in this matter.* Theſe threatnings, though very fearfull in the eyes of others, ſeemed but a matter of nothing to them, they made a tuſh at it, *We are not carefull to anſwer thee in this matter.* Even ſo people are then free from feare, who when evill is comming, care not for it; a man when he cares not for any thing that aſſailes him, hee ruſheth in upon it, and although it ſeeme to threaten unto him ſome miſchief, yet he is confident it cannot hurt him. So far forth as you can overlook evills drawing on upon you, more or leſſe, not regarding them, in reſpect of any hurt they can doe you, ſo far forth are you free from feare.

Object. You will ſay, none in the world can have ſuch a temper of ſpirit, when dangers are growing, eſpecially great and thick upon them.

Anſw. No : What ſay you of theſe three children? I ſpeak of men now, they were careleſſe.

Object. You will ſay, it may be, that was an extraordinary caſe.

Anſw. Nay, you ſhall finde, that the very ground of the undauntedneſſe of their ſpirits was the ſame which the Lord propoſeth in this Text,

Text, to put us out of feare. *We are careleſſe to anſwer thee in this matter.* Why? *Our God whom we ſerve is able to deliver us, and he will deliver us.* The careleſneſſe of their ſpirits was grounded upon a common principle of the whole Church, and upon the ſame, the Lord propoſeth to all the reſt of his people, as well as to them; they being confident God was their God, neither the greatneſſe of the King, nor the violence of his threatnings, could ſtir them a jot, they were all nothing to God, who was their God, who was able to deliver them, and would deliver them. Their confidence in this, was that which made them break forth into this bold expreſſion, *We are careleſſe to anſwer thee in this matter.* But now let us conſider, what the people of God ſhould not feare.

Object. What, to be affraid of nothing? doth not the Lord himſelfe commend feare to men? Nay, is not God himſelfe called *the fear of Iſaac?* and yet would you make us to believe, that we ſhould have no fear?

Anſw. I anſwer, there is a threefold feare; here is a naturall feare, a religious feare; and here is a turbulent feare: A naturall feare is nothing elſe, but ſuch an affection, as is in men by nature that they cannot be freed from; ſuch feare was in Chriſt himſelfe, without ſinne. here is a religious and godly feare, and that

is nothing but an awfull reverence, whereby people keepe a fit diſtance between the glorious Majeſty of God, and the meanneſſe of a creature, and it is oppoſed to ſaucineſſe: And there there is a turbulent feare, and that is a feare of diſquietneſſe; now all diſquieting feare, is that which the Lord endeavours to take off from his people.

Well, but what are the things, you will ſay, we ſhould not bee affraid, nor diſmayed at? Perhaps I ſhall pitch upon things people are much affraid of, and will thinke ſtrange that we ſhould not be affraid of them.

Firſt, I muſt tell you, the people of God, his owne people, they need not be affraid of their ſins; And yet let me not be miſtaken, I doe not ſay, we muſt not be affraid to ſinne, but they need not be affraid of their ſins, they that have God for their God, there is no ſin that ever they commit, can poſſibly doe them any hurt. Therefore, as their ſins cannot hurt them, ſo there is no cauſe of feare in their ſins they have committed.

Object. Some will be ready to ſay, This is ſtrange; All the evils in the world that come they grow up from the ſinfulneſſe of men. How can man be affraid of any thing, he ſhould bee afraid of ſin, from whence all evils do flow.

Anſw. I anſwer, beloved, it is true, ſin naturall

rally is a root bringing forth all manner of evill fruit, *The wages of ſinne is death*; but yet I ſay, what ever ſin in its owne nature brings forth, yet the ſins of Gods peculiar people, they that have God for their owne God, their ſins can doe them no hurt at all, and in that regard, there is no cauſe of feare from any of their ſins, that ever they have committed. Beloved, I conceive this may ſeeme ſomewhat harſh to ſome ſpirits, touching the truth of it, eſpecially to ſuch as miſconceive the drift at which I aim, which is not to incourage any one unto ſin, but to eaſe the conſciences of the diſtreſſed: I deſire you to reſolve with your ſelves this one thing, ſo far forth, as the Lord reveals it, ſo far you will ſit downe contented with the minde of the Lord revealed to you; and I beſeech you, kicke not againſt the truth. There is not one ſin, nor all the ſins together of any one believer, that can poſſibly do that believer any hurt, real hurt I mean: and therefore he ought not to be affraid of them. How will that be made good, you will ſay? I will make it appeare out of the ſeventh to the *Romans*, from the middeſt of the Chapter, to the end, you ſee how the Apoſtle carries it along, eſpecially about the 15. and 19. verſes, where it is true, the Apoſtle expreſſeth himſelfe in heavy complaints againſt ſuch ſins as befall believers: *The good*

that I would doe, that doe I not, and the evill that I would not do, that doe I; insomuch, that in the last verse but one, the Apostle with much vehemency, puts the question thus: *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Some will be ready presently to say here you see plainly is a fear of sin, or ought to be, here is a body of death in men to be afraid of. But give me leave to tell you, that the Apostle in this Chapter, as I conceive, doth personate a scrupulous spirit, and doth not speak out his owne present case as it was at the time when he speaks it, but speaks in the person of another, yet a Believer; and my reason for this: Because the Apostle, in respect of his owne person, what was become of sins, was already resolved; therefore I conceive he doth act the part of a troubled spirit, that in respect of the multitude and prevalency of corruption was ready to cry out, *O wretched man, who shall deliver mee from the body of this death?* But mark how the Apostle answers this question, whether it bee his owne case or anothers, for he will not stand upon that, and you shall plainly see the Apostle concludes, though there be such marvellous filthinesse and prevalency of sin, yet it cannot do any hurt at all. But, saith he, *I thanke God, through our Lord Jesus Christ* who will deliver me from this body of death

As much as to ſay, Indeed, till a man looke to Chriſt, there is nothing but matter of bitterneſſe and evill to be ſeen as the certain fruits of ſin, and there can be nothing but bitterneſſe in ſin, in regard of the evill that is like to follow it. But when perſons can once looke to Chriſt, the caſe is altered. What doth he thanke God for? He thanks God, that though naturally a body of death grew up by ſin; yet there is no prejudice in this kinde can come to him, through Chriſt. Now, that the Apoſtle doth plainly mean, that he thanks God, in that ſin could not doe him, or others any hurt: mark how in his thankfulneſſe he expreſſeth himſelf in the beginning of the 8. Chapter; *There is now no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt, that walke not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.* There you ſee the ground of the Apoſtles thankſgiving; namely, that now there is no condemnation to thoſe that are in Chriſt. No, you will ſay no condemnation in Hell, but yet, as there is remainders of ſinne in Gods owne people, ſo there will ſome evill or other fall upon the commiſſion of ſin; marke what the Apoſtle ſpeakes of it in the 2. and 4. verſes; Would you have the clear minde of the Spirit in it. There it is held forth; *The Law of the Spirit of life which is in Chriſt. hath freed mee from the law of ſinne and death: for what the Law*

could not doe, in that it was weake through the flesh, God sent forth his Son in the similitude of sinfull flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ, hath freed mee from the Law of sinne, and death. Here Christ ſtands for the deliverance of his people from condemnation, from eternall wrath, ſay ſome; yea, but ſaith the Apoſtle, wee are delivered from the Law of ſin and death: what is the Law of ſin, but what the Law may do to perſons, for thoſe ſins which are committed by them? Now what can ſin do when it is condemned? It is true, take a Traytor, as he is at liberty, hee may do miſchief, but take him as he is arraigned, and condemned, and as he is bound and manacled, he can doe no hurt. Now ſinne is condemned to the Believer, it can do no hurt at all to him: for what hurt can that doe unto a man which is carried into a Land of forgetfulneſſe, to avoid further prejudice of ſuch perſons that are indangered by it? When men have been found dangerous unto the State, it hath been a common practice to banith them the Kingdome, into a place far remote, where they cannot have any opportunity of doing any miſchief, and when they are banithed, they are not to returne againe, upon paine of death. Now, beloved, our Scape Goat hath carried our ſins into a Land of forgetfulneſſe. Conſi-

de-

ſider further; ſuppoſe a man be entered into many bonds, and they are for great ſummes; It is true, while they remaine bonds in force, ſuch a man is ſubject to feare arreſts; but put the caſe theſe bonds are all cancelled, that the debt in the Creditors book be blotted out, what hurt then can theſe bonds do unto a man, when the ſeal is torn off, and all the writing in the bond is blotted out? If a man ſaw a thouſand ſuch bonds, in which he were obliged, it would affright him no more then if he ſaw none at all. True indeed, every ſin is a great debt, and wee commit ſins daily and hourly againſt the Lord, and the torments of Hel is the merit of the leaſt ſin in the world; for, I ſpeake not this to extenuate any ſin, but to ſhew the greatnes of Gods Grace, and to eaſe, upon good grounds, diſtreſſed conſciences. Therefore, ſuch as look upon theſe ſins, as uncancelled, and theſe debts, as true debts; it is true, ſo long theſe ſins may work a horror and trembling in perſons, but for Believers that are the members of Chriſt, they may read fairly all the ſins that ever they have committed, they may read alſo the deſert of theſe tranſgreſſions, which ſhould be executed and inflicted upon them, if they were not cancelled and blotted out. But marke what the Lord ſpeaks, in the 43. of *Iſaiah*, *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions, for mine owne*

name ſake, and will not remember thy ſins. Now, what pre udice can that do, that is blotted out? I ſay, every debt of a Believer is a cancelled debt, ſo that the Lord himſelfe hath nothing at all to lay to a Believers charge: For, how can that Scorpion do hurt, that hath loſt his ſting, and ſpent his venome in the ſides of Chriſt, and left it there? *It was Chriſt that was wounded for the tranſgreſſions of his people, he was bruiſed for the iniquities of the faithfull, the chaſtiſements of their peace was upon him,* ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, in the 53. of *Iaiah*, and the 5. verſe. What hurt can there be to whom there is peace from God, and nothing but peace? It is true, our ſins themſelves do not ſpeak peace, but Chriſt bearing the ſinne and the wrath that theſe ſins doe deſerve, his chaſtiſement, or the wrath hee ſuſtained, ſpeaks peace to every Believer, whoſe tranſgreſſions he did beare. Therefore, beloved, be not affraid, ye that are Believers, and members of Chriſt, for fear of wrath breaking down from heaven upon you for ſuch and ſuch ſins, which you have committed, for they can do you no hurt, all your ſins together can do you no harme, all the ſting and poyſon of your ſins were ſpent upon the backe of Chriſt. Marke that excellent expreſſion of the Apoſtle in the 1 *Cor.* 15. 56, 57. he teis us there indeed, *that the ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſinne is*

the

the Law; ſo that here ſeems to be a ſting in ſin even to death it ſelfe. But mark what follows, *thanks be to God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that hath given us the victory.* What doth he meane? even the victory of overcoming of ſinne, and death, that is his true meaning. Though naturally ſin hath a ſting, yet there is a victory over this ſting. Chriſt is the death of it, as he tooke away the ſting of it, ſo that the ſins of Believers ſet up to affright them by Satan, or his inſtruments, they are but Scare-crows and Bugbears, things to fright ignorant children indeed, but men of inſight and underſtanding, are able to ſee that they are counterfeit things. It is true, before men come to ſee the light of the Goſpel of Chriſt, their ſins ſtare in their faces, ſeeming to ſpit fire at them: but juſt as you ſhall have children, it may be, put one of their company into hideous poſtures, and a fearfull and terrible repreſentation, cauſing every one that knowes it not, to run from him: ſo ſinne, as it is ſet up by Satan with a terrible viſage, as it were to ſpit fire in the faces of the godly, and faithfull, ſeems very threatning and dreadfull. But they are to know for certaine, it is but a made thing, there is no feare from the ſins of Believers, all the terror and fearfulneſſe of ſin Chriſt himſelfe hath drunk it, and in the drinking of it, Chriſt himſelfe our life, was crucified

fied, and in that regard, I ſay, all the terror and gaſtlineſſe, and hideouſneſſe of ſin, as it is repreſented by Satan, is ſpent, and in it ſelf is dead. It is true, indeed a living roaring Lion is a terrible creature, but in a dead Lion there is no more feare then is in a ſtick, or a ſtone, to him that knows he is dead. While ſin is alive, it is fearfull and terrible, and deadly; but when ſin it ſelf is dead, then there is no more terror in it then is in a dead Lion.

Thus I ſpeak concerning ſin, not as it ſmiles upon a man, with a promiſing countenance before it be committed, for ſo it is moſt dreadfull and odious to the faithfull, as that which crucified their ſweeteſt Lord: but as committed, and lying upon the conſcience of a Believer, indeavouring to drive him to deny the love and free Grace of God to him, and the all ſufficiency of Chriſt: For in this regard it is crucified by Chriſt, and ſo a Believer need not be affraid of ſin. Indeed, terrible it may ſeem to be at firſt, but there is no juſt cauſe of terribleneſſe in it, for it can doe no hurt. Therefore the Apoſtle telling us of the *Hand-writing of Ordinances that was againſt us, and contrary to us*, ſaith, *that Chriſt hath nailed them to his Croſſe*. So that the ſins of Believers are crucified with Chriſt; *they that are Chriſts, have crucified the fleſh, with the affections, and luſts thereof.* We

common-

commonly underſtand this, as if our mortification and denying of ſin, were the crucifying of the fleſh: but the Apoſtle ſpeaks otherwiſe there, and you may ſee, he intends, that they that are Chriſts are crucified with him, as much as to ſay, Chriſts dying upon the croſſe for Beleevers, his death became the death, that is, the expiation of ſin for them, that it ſhould be no more terrible unto them, nor affright the people of God. I have inſiſted the more upon this, becauſe indeed, it is the root from whence all other feares ſpring: For, from croſſes and afflictions, (which come upon perſons (of which we ſhall ſpeake preſently) they run immediately to their ſins, and conceive that it is their ſins that have put ſtings into them, and makes them ſo bitter; ſtill therefore they are perplexed with fears, as long as ſin is upon them: Certainly, ſome fearfull thing wil come upon them, Why? they have committed ſuch and ſuch ſins, theſe be the cauſe of their fear. But beloved, either deny plainly that Chriſt dyed for your ſins, and that he hath borne the whole wrath of God, that ſin hath deſerved, or ſit down by this truth that ſin did hurt Chriſt ſo much, that it cannot hurt the Believer for whom Chriſt did die.

Secondly, as we ſhould not fear our own ſins, being Believers, and members of Chriſt; ſo neither ought we to fear the ſins of others.

Object. You,

Object. You will say, supposing there be no sins of our own to pull downe judgement, yet the world is full of iniquity, and abundance of sins there are upon the times that bring downe wrath from Heaven.

Answ. Though it be true, that Nationall sins bring downe Nationall judgements and wrath; yet all the sins of the times cannot do a member of Christ a iot of hurt. And therefore, as they cannot do him any hurt, so he need not be affraid of them. I will make it appeare, that the sins of the world, the crying sins of the times, can do a Believer no hurt at all: Marke the plea of the Lord, often mentioned in *Ezekiel*, against the people that hit him in the teeth, as if he were unjust, *The fathers* say they, *have eaten sowre grapes, and the childrens teeth are set on edge.* He pleads his owne innocency in it, and directly answers, that *the soule that sinneth shall dye*; As much as to say, he that doth commit the fault, shall bear the burthen of it; thou that art not the committer of the fault, thou shalt not bear the burthen of it. Therefore the sins of the times that are committed by the wicked, they cannot do Gods people any hurt. The childrens teeth shall not be set on edge.

Object. I, but, some will say, I have had some hand in these sins, I did not reprove these sins, or, I did not seperate my selfe from them.

Answ. I

Anſw. I anſwer, ſuppoſe that the members of Chriſt are in ſome ſort acceſſary to theſe ſins yet, ſo far as you in your owne perſons, have been actors, or partakers of theſe tranſgreſſions, Chriſt hath borne theſe tranſgreſſions, and ſuffered for them. It is not ſome ſins that Chriſt bears, and leaves ſome ſins for Believers to bear, and ſo alſo leaves ſome puniſhment for Believers to ſuffer; for it is the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world; and that he doth take them all away, appeareth, 1 John 1.7. *The blood of Chriſt his Sonne, cleanſeth us from all ſins.* Whether then you conſider every elect perſon, as he ſinneth by himſelfe, or as he ſhareth with others, all theſe ſinnes the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth him from; and therefore, I ſay, the ſins of other people, they ſhall not, they cannot be imputed to him that is a Believer.

Object. But, you will ſay, ſurely the Lord doth ſend croſſes and afflictions upon his owne people, as well as upon the people of the world many times, and ſhould we not therefore bee affraid of them?

Anſw. Therefore in the third place, let mee tell you, as there is no occaſion nor need; nay, as people ought not to be affraid for the ſins of others, ſo ought not they to be affraid for the chaſtiſements of the Lord upon them. Conſider but the true nature of feare, looke upon things

things as they are in themſelves. If there bee occaſion of feare in any thing that may come, there muſt be evill in theſe afflictions, or elſe there need not be feare: now there is no evill in them, but all are exceeding good, and they work for good, and that that works for good, is not evill; every agent produceth effects anſwerable to its owne nature: an evill tree brings forth no good fruit, no more doth a good tree bring forth evill fruit; ſo then, if there be nothing but good in all the afflictions of the people of God, then there is no cauſe of feare, there is an apprehenſion of evill in a thing, if there be feare, but there is not a juſt apprehenſion of evill in a thing that is good: be aſſured of this, there is no feare to be had of afflictions, let them be never ſo tart, let them be never ſo great or many. Oh, ſaith one, I ſhall be undone, as others are, that are plundered, here the heart is diſturbed and diſtracted. But beloved, ſuppoſe you loſe all that you have, even the wife out of your boſomes, and your children out of your arms, & ſo you be deprived of all, yet there is no evill in them, and therefore you ought not to be affraid. There is nothing but good in them: the Apoſtle in the 12. *Hebr.* tells us, that it is true, *for the preſent, no affliction ſeems joyous, but grievous*; yet he takes away all occaſions of feare, though for the preſent they ſeem evill, yet

after-

afterwards, ſaith he, *they bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſſe to thoſe that are exerciſed therewith.* What hurt is in them, when they bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſſe? In afflictions, they are refined as Silver, and as Gold. What hurt is there to Silver in the fire, when nothing is intended but the ſeperation of the droſſe from the Silver? When the Lord afflicts his people, he ſits as a Refiner to take away the droſſe. The afflictions of Gods people are nothing but the refinings of God, to take away the ruſt. What hurt is there in Phylick, eſpecially in good phyſick, when the body is diſtempered? They that know the benefit of it, will they be affraid of it, though it make them ſicke for a time? It is true, ignorance and ſuſpition of the operation will make men affraid, but the Lord hath made it knowen to us, that all his chaſtiſements are the fruits of his love, and this is the end of all, to take away their ſins. It is true, men need not feare that the ſins they commit ſhall do them hurt, but the Lord makes uſe of afflictions, to purge out ſin from the converſation, where it is a trouble and burthen, both to the faithfull and Brethren, though hee doth not revenge himſelfe of any before committed.

Thirdly, as wee ought not to be affraid of ſin and afflictions in generall, ſo for the preſent

we

we ſhould take notice, that they that have God for their God, muſt not be afraid of men. The enemies of God, they that fight againſt God there needs no feare, either of their wrath, or of their policy, nor of their menaces, nor of their cruelty. There is no cauſe of feare of any of theſe. It is true, there is doubtleſſe, an implacableneſſe of rage, and an unchangeable reſolution of revenge, if poſſibly they could, even to bring fire from Heaven to devour the ſervants of the living God: But if their rage were more deſperate then it is, there is no cauſe at all to feare, in as much as God is the God of ſuch a people. In the 120. *Pſalme*, you ſhall ſee that there is no cauſe to feare, though there bee never ſo much evill approaching. This *Pſalme* was made of purpoſe, to ſet forth this thing, that the godly need not feare the fury of the oppreſſor: *If the Lord had not been on our ſide when men roſe up againſt us, they had ſwallowed us up, when their fierce wrath was kindled againſt us; but bleſſed be the Lord*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *that hath not given us as a prey to their teeth; our ſoule eſcaped as a Bird out of the ſnare of the Fowler, the ſnare is broken, and wee are delivered.* Here is fierce wrath, but yet here is eſcaping as a Bird out of the ſnare of a Fowler, and how comes this to paſſe? the Lord is their help, and hee is on their ſide: If the Lord had not been

been on their ſide, they had been ſwallowed up quick; and if ſo be the Lord be on our ſide, what need of fear is there at all of their wrath? The *Pſalmiſt* tells us, that *ſurely the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee, and the remainder of wrath thou ſhalt reſtrain*, Pſal. 76. 10. See what little cauſe there is of fear from the wrath and rage of men there ſhall nothing but matter of praiſe come forth to the Lord out of it. Wilt thou be afraid of that by which the Lord ſhall bee praiſed? The Lord is praiſed by the wrath of men, and all the ſuperfluity of wrath, all that is over and above, more then is for the glory of God, the Lord will reſtraine that, *The wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee, and the remainder of wrath thou ſhalt reſtraine.* The wrath that is more then for his praiſe, the Lord will be ſure to keep it in, and the wrath that is for the glory of God, wilt thou be afraid of it?

Moreover, as you ought not to feare the wrath of men, ſo you ought not to fear the policy of the enemies of God. Though hell it ſelf combine with them, to lay ſnares to entrap the people of God, there is no cauſe of fear of them; let there be *Achitophels* among them, whoſe counſell is as an Oracle of God, yet the Lord will turn their counſell into fooliſhneſſe. The Lord of ſuch a people, he confounds the wiſdome of the wiſe, and brings to nought the

counſell of the prudent, where is the Wiſeman? where is the Scribe? Where is the Diſputer of this world? He hath choſen the fooliſh things of this world to confound the wiſe, as well as the weak things of the world to confound the ſtrong. Now, if the Lord chooſe fooliſh things to confound the wiſe, or the wiſe things of the world to confound themſelves; why oughteſt thou to be affraid?

Thirdly, there is no occaſion of fear (to them that have God for their God) of the inſtruments of cruelty. Let them have all the inſtruments that cruelty it ſelfe can invent, fear them not; fear not their ſwords, fear not their guns, fear not their engines of war. No weapons formed againſt the Church of Chriſt ſhall proſper. What need we to be affraid of that which ſhall not proſper? Now, the Lord ſaith plainly, that no weapon formed againſt the Church ſhall proſper. You know indeed, that unto a naked breaſt, a ſword is terrible, but where there is a coat of male to fence off a ſword, he that hath on this coat, is, or need be no more affraid of the thruſt of a ſword, then when there is no ſword at all thruſt againſt him, eſpecially when he knowes his coat of male is ſword proof, that a ſword cannot pierce it. Armour of proofe, you know will keep out a bullet, when a man knowes his armour is of proof indeed

indeed, he cares not whether he hath a dagger thruſt at it, or a piſtoll ſhot againſt it or no, he fears not, he cares not: The armour of believers, is piſtoll-proof, it cannot be ſhot through.

Object. But you will ſay, many are ſlaine, will you condemne all that are killed by their enemy, as not Believers?

Anſw. Miſtake me not, I doe not ſay they are ſword-proof, ſo that the ſame thing may not befall unto them, as unto others; but only ſo, that nothing that befalls them, can be truly evill unto them. and in reſpect of the ſoule, all that the enemy can do, cannot deſtroy the ſouls of Believers.

Object. Do you not ſee them dead, you will ſay?

Anſw. But marke what the Apoſtle ſaith, *Our life is hid with Chriſt in God.* It is true, there is a naturall life, and that life may be deſtroyed as well as the life of a wicked man, but yet the ſoule of a Believer is not deſtroyed, the ſoul is cannon-proof, all the devills in hell cannot deſtroy it; *The life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Sonne of God; Chriſt himſelfe is our life. Now, when Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall appeare, then ſhall wee appeare with him in glory.* So that Chriſt himſelfe may be killed before our lives ſhall bee deſtroyed by the enemies. You that

are Believers have this advantage of your enemies the unbelievers, you may take away their lives, but they cannot take away your lives. They have but one life, a naturall life, but they that are Believers, have a life in Christ; nay, Christ is their life, he himself shall be annihilated before they shal. All the power of the sword cannot take away that life from you; it is true, they may take you out of this world, and the comforts of it; but know, this world, when the Lord will have the soule separated from it, is a comfortlesse world. If the Lord himself should answer a person to give him life in the world, when himself hath purposed to take him out of the world, the world and life it self would be a hell to him. Beloved, know this, that the Lord intends only your good in all your changes, and that which is best, the Lord provides for you. Though your life be taken away from you, where is the losse? where is the hurt? Consider it well, beloved, death is but the opening of the prison doors, to let you out of prison; it is but the arriving of a vessell into the haven of rest. What doth the sword do when it enters into a Believer? it makes but a change of immortality for mortality, of life for death, of strength for weaknesse, of glory for shame, of holinesse for sin. It doth but pull down a rotten house of clay, to give possession of mansions

ſions of glory. It doth but take perſons from a cottage at will, to enter into a Lordſhip of inheritance: for it gives full poſſeſſion of an eternall inheritance. The ſword, that enters into the breaſt of a Believer, it doth but put him into the chamber of the Bridegroome, and conſummates the marriage of the Lamb to that perſon. It is the fulfilling of the great cry of the Saints, *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly*: and, *I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt*: It takes the Bride into communion, and fellowſhip with her long-looked for Beloved, and gives her poſſeſſion of thoſe things that take up her longing. While we are in the fleſh, we are abſent from the Lord; we enioy the viſion of Chriſt now but in hope, and we enjoy it but darkly: but when *this earthly tabernacle ſhall bee diſſolved, we have an houſe not made with hands*; ſaith the Apoſtle. It doth but carry the Believer out of a barren, bluſtering, troubleſome wilderneſſe, unto his home, to ſit downe with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, in the Kingdome of glory. What hurt is there in all this? Conſider this, that when the worſt comes to the worſt, if ye ſhould be brought into the greateſt ſtrait that ever man was in, when cruelty ſhall rage and ſwell to the very top, and to its utmoſt bounds. This is that which ſtayes up the heart, and makes the weakeſt ſpirits ſtrong; and the

want of this, makes the ſtrongeſt run away. When a man ſhall thinke with himſelfe, if I ſhould be now thruſt through by the ſword of the enemy, what will become of me? If I be not a member of Chriſt, I ſhall go to Hell for ever. Oh, how will this ſtartle him! This in the heart of the ſtouteſt ſouldier, is enough to make him run away, have he never ſo much courage; but when a man ſhall ſtand in the face of an enemy, and the bullets flye about him on every ſide; if when he ſhall thus think with himſelf, What if one of theſe ſhould hit me, what ſhall become of me? whither ſhould I goe? If he can but ſay in true faith, Heaven is mine, and Chriſt is mine, I ſhall goe preſently unto God my Father, at whoſe right hand are ioyes for evermore; I cannot have a better turne done unto me, then by one of theſe meſſengers, to be ſent preſently thither. It is recorded, that there was a man had a ſpear run at him, by one that ſought his life, and entring, it happened to lance an ulcer, that all the Phyſitians could never cure: that thruſt of the ſpear, cured the ulcer. Oh, beloved, all the world is not able to cure the ulcers that are in Believers, in reſpect of the cohabitation and practice of ſin: for ſin will ariſe, and breake forth in ſpite of all the world, and they ſhall not ceaſe to ſin, till they ſhall ceaſe to be here below: Now the ſword that enters

into

into the hearts of the Believers, and members of Christ, that sword at one thrust perfectly cures all the ulcers of sinfulnesse, that there shall never arise any more after that: Now what hurt is there in that spear, that cures in stead of killing?

This, beloved, I speake by way of encouragement, to all the faithfull; when the enemy looks big upon you, and your hearts are ready to faint, consider what the Lord saith, *I am your God, be not affraid, nor dismayed*: Sometimes I observe people looke upon Believers with an evill eye, because they doe not see them of such dejected countenances, and so full of fearful expressions as are in themselves, or are in others: Thereupon they presently censure them to bee such as are void of sense, and full of security. But consider, hath not the Lord promised, that they shall not be moved with evill tydings? Is there nothing in all the promises of God? Will you say there is no strength, nor truth in him, in whom is the fulnesse of all, that when you finde such an undauntednesse of spirit in any man, that when men speake of fire and sword, and the cruelty of the enemy, shall say, we are careleſſe, as touching this matter, you shall say they are stupified, or carnally secure? Do you not therein charge the three children for the same? Shall the people of God, who out of the

apprehenſion of God being their God, and being out of the gun-ſhot of ſin, ſay, we fear not touching this matter, ſhall they be condemned for it? They know: wherein pain is, and miſery is, and death is, which thou art not ſenſible of. Do not then condemn God therefore. Is thine eye evill, becauſe Gods is good?

Now, what are the diſadvantages by this diſmayedneſſe of ſpirit? there are three ſorts of them:

Firſt, fearfulneſſe and diſmayedneſſe of ſpirit doth produce a great deal of prejudice unto God, not ſimply to the being of God, but to the glory and honour of God; fearfulneſſe and diſmayedneſſe, caſt many ſlanders upon him.

1. Slanders upon his power.
2. Slanders upon his faithfulneſſe.
3. Slanders upon his care and providence.
4. Slanders upon the freeneſſe of his grace.
5. Slanders upon the efficacy of the ſufferings of Chriſt.

To touch of theſe a little, which by the grace of God, may quit your hearts of theſe feares.

Firſt, it caſts a ſlander upon the power of God: If you lend a man an hundred pounds, and he give you a bond to pay it you againe, it may be you feare you ſhall not have it againe; What is the ground of it? I doubt, ſay you, he

he will not be able to pay me. When fear ariſeth from ſuch a Principle, now doth not this caſt an aſperſion upon the ability and ſufficiency of the man? If you did think he were an able man indeed, you would not ſuſpect him: ſo when you ſee ſuch and ſuch evills growing towards you, and you begin to be afraid, and to cry out, Doubtleſſe, I ſhall ſink under them, God is not able to deliver me, at ſuch a time; I ſay, Unbelief of the power of God being the occaſion of ſuch fear, it thereby caſts an heavy ſlander upon God.

Object. But ſome may ſay, I did never doubt of the ability of God.

Anſw. If you doe not, yet *Iſrael* did, *Can God*, ſay they, *give fleſh in the wilderneſſe?* And conſider with your ſelves how often it hath been in the hearts of people, when they have been in any great extremity; How ſhall we eſcape? there is no poſſibility for us to avoid this evill. Is not this now a calling in queſtion the power of God, in ſuch fears as theſe are: If ſo, then is there a great ſcandall caſt upon the power of God.

Secondly, it likewiſe brings a ſcandall to the faithfulneſſe and truth of God. Some will ſay, I do not queſtion whether God can do this, but all my fear is, whether he will doe it or no. This fear ariſeth from hence; there is a ſuſpicion

cion that God will not do it. Now, I ask this queſtion, Hath God ſaid he will doe it? Hath he ſaid, *I will never faile thee, nor forſake thee?* Hath he ſaid, that all things ſhall worke together for our good? Hath he ſaid it? and doe you feare he will not do it? What do you make of God? Is not God as good as his word? Is God and his faithfulneſſe out of credit with you? Hath God ſaid, and will he not perform? If a man hath promiſed to give you a hundred pound, and when he is gone, you fear you ſhall never have it, doe you not call in queſtion the honeſty of this man? doe you not make him a lier? Hath not God promiſed to ſave you and defend you? to be your ſhield and buckler? now you by fear calling this in queſtion, is this any better, then to charge God with diſhoneſty? and to make him a lyer, that he hath ſaid, and will not make good what hee hath ſaid?

Thirdly, you charge the providence and care of God; you know what God hath ſaid, *Be carefull for nothing, but in all things make your requeſts knowne to him*; and bids *caſt your care upon him, for he careth for you*; doe you thinke God is mindfull of you, and cares for you when extremity of danger comes upon you, and you feare you ſhall miſcarry in ſuch a danger, either you muſt thinke that he doth not

minde

mind you nor regard you, or if he doth, he is not able to helpe you. This was *Davids* fault, he runs on in this manner: *Hath he forgotten to be gracious, hath he ſhut up his loving kindneſſe in diſpleaſure: will he be merciſull no more?* hee charged God with forgetfulneſſe.

Fourthly, you caſt a ſcandall upon the free grace of God. When thou art thus afraid thy fear is that ſuch an evill will overtake thee, and withall, thou lookeſt upon thy deſerts, and thou ſayſt this may well come upon me, I have deſerved it; I have committed ſuch and ſuch ſins, and they will certainly provoke the Lord to ſend all theſe evills I feare upon me; becauſe thou haſt ſinned, thou doſt feare ſuch punihments will come upon thee, conſider how thou ſcandalleſt the freeneſſe of the grace of God; there is no avoiding of evill, ſayſt thou, becauſe ſin hath been committed, yet herein doth grace indeed conſiſt, that though ſin be committed, yet there ſhall no wrath be provoked, nor puniſhment inflicted. So often as men fear afflictions from ſins committed, ſo often they ſlander the grace of God There is no way for me to eſcape, for I have ſinned, will men think. When a ſcholar ſhall come home to his father, and cry I have committed a fault, there is no eſcaping the rod, for every fault I commit, I ſhall be whipped, is not this to caſt a ſcandall upon the

cleanſing

clemency of the Maſter? as if he were ſo rigid that he would paſſe by no fault. If you upon ſin committed, fear the falling of wrath and judgement, what doe you thinke of God? doe you not plainly declare, that there is no clemency in him?

Laſtly, you caſt a ſlander upon the ſuffering of Chriſt, you that fear wrath, becauſe you have committed ſuch and ſuch a ſin; Beloved, to what purpoſe tend the ſufferings of Chriſt? was it not for the ſins of men? did the Lord behold the travell of his ſoule, and was he ſatisfied? and when he is ſatisfied, will he come and exact a new payment, after that ſatisfaction given and acknowledged? either God muſt be diſhoneſt, to exact payment twice for one debt, or Chriſts ſatisfaction was inſufficient? If Chriſt did not beare all the wrath of God, but you muſt bear ſome of it your ſelves, where is the efficacy of the ſuffering of Chriſt? If the ſufferings of Chriſt were ſufficient, wherefore ſhould you then feare any wrath at all? Certainly, you muſt either ſay, Chriſt hath not born all indignation, and ſo make the Scripture a lyer, which ſaith, *he beheld the travell of his ſoul, and was ſatisfied*, and the ſuffering of Chriſt of none effect; or elſe, though ſin hath been committed, you cannot feare wrath, or any evill, as the effect of wrath to be afflicted.

The

The ſecond prejudice of feare is, as it reſpects Gods ſervice; it may appeare divers wayes to you:

Firſt, ſo far forth as fear poſſeſſes the heart, ſo far forth is faith ſuppreſſed; this fear is the cut-throat of believing; In quietneſſe and confidence, ſhall be your reſt; where there is reſt, there is confidence, and where there is no reſt, there can be no confidence; therefore as far as you fear the afflictions of the world, in reſpect of your ſins, ſo far are you weak in faith; Faith makes men ſit downe ſatisfied and ſetled in ſpirit, whereas fear fills men full of queſtioning and doubtings of things: when things are dark, and not clear, there are diſputings, but faith, that puts an end to all doubts and fears: wherefore, ſo long as there is fear, there is unbelief.

Secondly, *fear* and *diſmayednеſſe* is prejudiciall to all religious duties: firſt, it is a damper of prayer; Beloved, you know, that the life of prayer lies in faith, *If any man pray, let him aske in faith*, ſaith St. *James*, Faith is the wing of prayer, and carries it up to heaven; clip the wings of prayer, and the motions of it muſt be ſlow. Beloved, you that are afraid, doth fear and diſmayednеſſe take hold of your ſpirits? marke in ſuch a fit, what hearts you have to pray. In brief, there is this great prejudice in fear, it makes all the duties that perſons perform,

form, meerly ſelfiſh. You know that a ſervant is very diligent for his maſter, when no danger cometh, but let the ſervant be in fear of any danger, he will leave his maſters buſineſſe to ſhitt for himſelfe, and ſeek for his own ſafety: So conſider it well, whether your hearts are not for your ſelves in your ſervices, when there is a ſtrong paſſion of feare in your ſpirits: when a man is in prayer againſt ſome evill he fears is approaching unto him, what prayer is it? He is altogether for himſelfe, that he may be delivered from his preſent feare; there is not a thought (ſo far as this fear prevails) that God may be glorified all the while, but only of the evill that is upon him, or that is like to fall upon him whereas the Believer ſhould ſerve with ſincerity and ſingleneſſe of ſpirit; he ſhould do that which he doth as unto the Lord, (ſaith the Apoſtle) Do not miſtake, it is not the ſpiritualneſſe, nor the fervency in the performance of duties that carries it; duties are not expiatory helpers with Chriſt: But, I ſay, when duties are performed as to the Lord, and for the Lord, and not to, and for himſelf, then are they right as ſervices. But all our hope that we muſt have in any condition, muſt be only from the grace of God, and all our performances that we do act, muſt be to the Lord for what he hath done for us. Therefore, ſeeing it is the Lord himſelf

that

that calls upon you, and claps you on the back, and bids you be not afraid, take courage from the Lord, and quit your selves like men. In danger be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: There is this difference between Gods call and mans call, to do any thing: men call men to services and employments, but cannot give them power & ability to perform that which they are called unto; but God calls and gives influence of his owne to make men doe such things as he calls them unto. The Lord saith, Feare not, and in the voyce of the Lord there is life, to frame the same temper in your hearts. Christ, he shall stand over your dead hearts as he did over the dead body of *Lazarus*, saying, *Lazarus, arise*, who immediatly arose: the word of his mouth carried life into it, and with it: So it saith, *Fear not*, and immediately it takes away all feare from the spirit of that man he speaks inwardly unto: other men may speak, and speak their hearts out, and never the better, but when God calls upon you not to be afraid, he is present in his Ordinances, meerly for his owne sake, to hold out this undauntednesse of spirit to you, it is now with you if you imbrace it it is at your dores, he will make you of a strong and undaunted spirit, he shal strengthen you as that *Leviathan* the Lord speakes of in the 41. of *Job*, which esteemed Iron as straw,

and

and braſſe as rotten wood, becauſe his ſcales were ſo ſtrong: know this, that Believers are the *Leviathans* of God, hee will ſo ſteel their ſpirits, that they ſhall cut Iron as ſtraw, and Braſſe as rotten wood. The Lord is able to put ſuch a ſpirit into you, and he will make good his promiſe, wherein he hath ingaged himſelfe, that his ſtrength ſhall be made perfect in weakneſſe; therefore, though you have ſaid, My ſtrength faileth me, yet the Lord ſhall be the ſtrength of your hearts, and your portion for ever; thus you ſhall give that to the Lord that fearfull men rob him of, that is, the glory of his power, of his faithfulneſſe, of the freenes and riches of his grace, and care of his peoples welfare, and Chriſt of his ſufficiency, wherein he hath promiſed plentifully to ſupply you with all ſpirituall ſtrength and vigor, that you ſhall run and not be weary, that you ſhall walk, and not be faint. In a word, there are a few civill reſpects that I will mention as motives againſt this fear, I will but touch them.

Firſt, know, fear, eſpecially diſmayedneſſe, puts a man beſides his wits, that while he is in ſuch a paſſion, he is to ſeek for common wayes of ſafety: ſo that whereas men thinke that fear will helpe them to avoid danger, commonly in amazedneſſe, you ſhall have people ſtand ſtill, not able to ſtir or ſlip aſide, to ſave themſelves,

ſelves. Beſides, this fear is ſuch a rack and torment, that commonly thoſe evills ſo much feared, prove not ſo hurtfull nor evill to a perſon as the preſent fears; and beſides this, feare many times, it doth not only daunt the ſpirit of a man in himſelf, but proves very dangerous to others: you already have had ſufficient experience not long ſince, of the evill and miſchiefe this fear had like to have occaſioned in the Army, a thouſand to one it was, that the fear of ſome had not made all the reſt to flye; and it was a miracle of mercy, that there ſhould be ſo great a feare in the Army, and the Army yet ſtand ſo to it; feare at ſuch a time, is of a wonderfull ſpreading and dangerous nature; fearfulneſſe in one, kindles fearfulneſſe in many, and ſo not only mens perſons, but alſo the Cauſe it ſelfe is hazarded, but theſe are but low things in reſpect of the prejudice God himſelfe ſuſtains in the feare of men; therefore, for your encouragement, conſider what the Lord hath in ſtore for you, nothing he hath, nothing he is, or can give, doth he think too good for you, but he is willing to part with it to make you happy; he parts not with his goods, but with his Son for you; nay, beloved, he parts with that which is more, if any thing can be more then his Son, that is, himſelfe: Will you now deprive your ſelves of the ſweet enjoy-

ment of all theſe, by your baſe and unbelieving and fearfull hearts? Nay, rather let us freely receive, let us thankfully acknowledge, and confidently reſt upon our Fathers abundant mercy, expreſſed in ſo many bleſſings; but eſpecially in the gift of his only Son, given unto us, that we might ſerve him, *without feare, in holineſſe and righteouſneſſe, all the dayes of our life,* Luke 1.74,75.

SERMON

SERMON. II.

Iſaiah 41. verſ. 10.

Feare thou not, for I am with thee; be not diſmayed, for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſſe.

UPon the like occaſion that is now offered unto us, I have (peradventure, in the hearing of ſome preſent) made entrance into theſe words I have read now unto you; I ſhall give you but a taſte of what I have formerly ſpoken, ſo much as may ſerve by way of introduction to that, in which I mean to ſpend the remainder of this time.

The occaſion of theſe words, you may ſee in the former paſſage of this Chapter. At this preſent inſtant, a great tumult and uproar was raiſed, upon the raiſing of the righteous Man, from the Eaſt, that is, the ſetting up of Chriſt: Such a noyſe there was, that God was fain to

call for ſilence, *verſ.*1. and for their plea, at the latter end of the verſe. If they have any thing to ſay againſt this buſineſſe of ſetting up of Chriſt, let them bring their ſtrongeſt reaſons, (ſaith the Lord.) Having thus obtained ſilence, the Lord makes his plea againſt their tumultuous oppoſition, verſ. 2. *Who is he that hath raiſed him up, and hath given Nations to him, and made him to rule over Kings? I the Lord did it,* ſaith he, *verſ.*4. What have you to ſay to me? He ſhall proſper, and he ſhall proſper with facility, and eaſe, he ſhall go ſoftly, he ſhall never run for fear of being circumvented; *Hee ſhall go in a way that his foot hath not trode before*, he ſhall go further then he hath gone; and what ſay they to this, when God ſpeaks? Yet the tumultuous men will not be quiet, they lay their heads together, as you finde, they conſult to finde out helpe: nay they conſpire, the *Carpenter* and the *Smith* have laid their heads together.

Now, becauſe there is ſuch a combuſtion when Chriſt is ſet up, leſt the people of the Lord ſhould be poſſeſſed with diſmayednesſe and feare of miſcarriage, the Lord turnes his ſpeech to theſe oppoſed: *Fear not, I am with thee, be not diſmayed, I am thy God.* Chriſt, when ever he is exalted, did, doth, and will, finde great oppoſition, but in ſpite of all oppoſition

Chriſts

Chriſts exaltation ſhall proſper, all their oppoſition ſhal not hinder; nay, he wil go ſoftly, that the world may ſee that he is not afraid of all oppoſition whatſoever. Firſt, in this Text, the Lord is pleaſed to provide a pillow, as for a King, for the heads of his people, or a ſtaffe for their trembling hand: a pillow to ſupport their ſinking ſpirits they are apt to be diſcouraged, it ſeems the Lord is pleaſed to take their condition into his hand, to ſpeak to the occaſion of their trembling, and to give out ſuch words that may be a ſtay, that they may ſtand faſt, though bluſtrings grow greater then they are.

The Text is nothing elſe but a gracious incouragement, or a comfortable ſupport of a ſinking ſpirit. The incouragement is in theſe words; *Fear not, be not diſmayed:* the grounds and arguments by which he would prevaile with them not to fear, nor be diſmayed, are in theſe words: I *am with thee; I am thy God; I will helpe thee; I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſſe.* The point is this; That they that have God for their God, need never fear, nor be diſmayed, ſeeing this their God is with them, will helpe them, ſtrengthen them, and uphold them with the right hand of his righteouſneſſe.

Concerning this feare and diſmayedneſſe, we ſpake largely the laſt time we ſpake upon this occaſion.

1. What it is, not to be afraid.
2. What we are not to be afraid of.
3. What the inconveniences of ſuch feare are.

In brief, not to feare, is no more but a compoſedneſſe, and ſetledneſſe of ſpirit, againſt any evill that commeth. Excellent is that expreſſion in the 112. *Pſalme, verſ.* 8. *They ſhall not be afraid of evill tidings.* What is that? *Their heart is fixed*, their heart is eſtabliſhed, they ſhall not be removed. Here is the expreſſion of a fearleſſe heart, a heart fixed, a heart eſtabliſhed, a heart not moved. You have it likewiſe excellently ſet out in *Daniel* 3. in an example, the 16. *verſ.* in the ſtory of the three children, being ſentenced to be caſt into the fiery furnace; they came before the great King *Nebuchadnezzar*, and hee ſpake big to them, and tells them what they muſt truſt unto, if they will not fall down and worſhip his Gods. Mark now, how their fearleſneſſe and diſmayedneſſe is expreſſed: *We are not careſull to anſwer thee in this matter, our God whom we ſerve, he will deliver us.* See what a diſpoſition this fearleſneſſe is, and then what is the ground of it. *We are not careſull to anſwer thee in this matter*; here is a true fearleſneſſe, if when ever evill comes, men can ſay, it matters not, we are ready for it: And look into the root of it, and you ſhall finde it in their anſwer: *our God*

God is able to deliver us, that made them ſo careleſſe in ſo weighty a thing; *Our God whom wee ſerve, he will deliver us.*

Secondly, what it is we ſhould not fear. I anſwer, firſt, we ſhould not fear God himſelf, as to do us any hurt; fear him with awfull reverence we muſt A Believer that is the ſervant and choſen of God, need not fear that God will do him any hurt. *It is God that juſtifieth*, therefore it is not God that will harm thee. The heart of God is to his people; *My bowells are troubled for thee*, ſaith God to *Ephraim*. Can he hurt them while he is troubled for them?

Secondly, they muſt not fear their own ſins, I do not ſay, they ought not to fear to commit ſinne, but they ought not to feare what hurt their ſinnes can doe them, ſeeing they are blotted out. If a man have ſubſcribed unto, and ſealed a hundred Bonds, and all theſe Bonds be quite cancelled, and blotted out, he need not fear no hurt theſe Bonds can do him: *Paul* in the 7. of *Rom.* complaineth indeed of a body of death, and the power of ſin; but in the cloſure of the Chapter, he ſhews how little he fears any thing that ſin could doe: *Thanks be unto God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* What doth he thank the Lord for? that though his ſins were ſo great, yet they could not do him any hurt, nor any of Gods people. Look into

the beginning of the 8. Chapter, it is plaine: *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walke not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: For the Law of the Spirit of life that is in Christ, hath freed me from the Law of sin and death: For, what the Law could not do, in that it was weake through the flesh, God sending his owne Son in the likeneſſe of ſinfull fleſh, and for ſin, condemned ſin in the fleſh.* What hurt can this do? Now, beloved, give me leave to tell you, if you be Believers, and weak in faith, I dare bee bold to ſay, nothing cuts the heart ſo much, in reſpect of fear of evill, as the ſins you do commit: theſe will be ſwords to your hearts. But if you be Believers indeed, the ſword is broken, the ſting is gone; *The ſting of death is ſinne, the ſtrength of ſinne is the Law,* 1 Cor. 15. *but thanks be to God,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *that hath given us the victory* over ſinne and death: ſo that we may boldly ſay, *Oh death! where is thy ſting? Oh grave! where is thy victory?* If you be the Lords, and the Lord be yours, if you be Believers, you may triumph as the Apoſtle doth, *Oh death! where is thy ſting?* It is gone; nay, *Oh death!* (ſaith the Lord in the Propheſie of *Hoſea*) *I will be thy deſtruction.* I beſeech you, give not care, either to Satan, or to whatſoever inſtrument he hath, that would poſſeſſe you, that though Chriſt dyed for you, and hath borne

your

your ſins himſelfe upon the Croſſe, or upon the tree, (as the Apoſtle *Peter* expreſſeth) yet thoſe ſame ſins will doe you hurt, and prove a miſchief and bane to you. I ſay, there cannot bee greater deſpite done, nor affront offered unto Chriſt, then to make the Believer conceive that he was not able to beare their ſinnes, nor the wrath of God ſufficiently for them, but that they muſt be wounded, notwithſtanding all that Chriſt hath done. If Chriſt be hurt, as much as ſin can hurt him, how can any man be hurt by it, for whom Chriſt ſuffered? If Chriſt upon the Croſſe took the ſting out of it and carried it to his own grave, how commeth it to have a new ſting? or did Chriſt dye in vain? If he took away the ſting of one ſin, and not the ſting of another, there were need of another Chriſt, it ſeems, to take away that ſting that is behind, and ſo Chriſt hath not perfected for ever them that are ſanctified. I deſire you to heare with patience; this is the firſt ground of all your comfort in affliction, that ſin is gone, for then all afflictions in the world cannot diſcomfort, ſeeing all diſcomfort ariſeth from ſin, which is the ſting of affliction. Hereupon the Apoſtle triumpheth, *Who can lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that juſtifieth, who can condemne?* Contrariwiſe, the ſoul is in the greateſt bitterneſſe, when ſin remains, and the ſting

ſting of it is not taken away, but when God is reconciled, as he is to the faithfull; for, *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelfe, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them*; how then can ſinne do hurt? when it is not to be imputed? God doth uſe to reckon when he doth take payment. If God doth not reckon with men, he will never ſmite them with wrath; as is the wrath, ſo muſt be the ſmart, and harm, and hurt, that perſon is to ſuſtain, in reſpect of the ſins committed. Chaſtiſe he doth indeed, for ſpeciall ends, but the ſin doth not at all hurt: And though the Lord doth afflict, that will do you no hurt neither: afflictions are the phyſicke of God, to purge and ſanctifie the converſation: Will a man thinke, that is ready to dye of the ſtone, or wind-cholick, or ſtoppage in the ſtomach, if a Phyſitian comes, and gives him a bitter potion, that he doth do him any hurt, when he knoweth it is to recover his life, and ſave it? he knowes he dyes if he heals not the infirmity; God uſeth no phyſick, no chaſtiſement and affliction, but it ſhall worke for good: ſo the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, in *Hebr.* 12. *No affliction for the preſent is joyous, but grievous; yet afterwards it bringeth forth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſſe, to them that are exerciſed therewith.* It bringeth forth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſſe, what hurt is there in all this?

But

But I muſt go on, and come to that which I have more particularly to deliver to you, and that is upon the conſideration of Gods motives, by which he doth attempt to prevail over the ſpirits of his people, not to be afraid, or diſmayed, come what can, or may come: you know God is beſt able to perſwade; God beſt knows what Rhetorick will take with his own people: A man that hath had the breeding of a childe, and ſo comes to obſerve the temper of it, can better tell then any other, which way to win him: God hath the breeding of his own children; nay, God goeth further, he hath the ſpirits of his children at his own beck, and therefore can beſt tell which way to work upon their ſpirits, and to beget that in them which he calls for of them. The Lord would have them not to be afraid, nor diſmayed: Let the Lord propoſe his way to bring them to this compoſedneſſe, and fixedneſſe of ſpirit, it is but preſumption in any creature to conceive, there may be better wayes to work upon the ſpirits of men, then that which God preſcribes. And it is worth your obſervation to conſider, that when the Lord puts his people upon a compoſedneſſe, and fixedneſſe of ſpirit, he doth not ſay, Fear not, for you have faſted, for you have prayed, for you have forſaken your ſins, and denied your ſelves, and walked

walked holily with me, and therefore, becauſe you have done this and that, Feare you not. The Lord doth not ſay ſo here, he hath higher Propoſitions that he propoſeth, that have more excellent vertue to move his people: He ſaith, *Feare not, I am thy God; I will helpe thee, and uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſſe.* The proviſion for the upholding of ſpirits againſt feare, when evill cometh, it is without a mans ſelfe, in him that is a rock, and unchangeable: The Lord doth not ſay, You change not, therefore you are not conſumed, you continually proceeded in holines, you waver not, therefore you are not conſumed: but, *I am God, and change not, therefore ye ſons of Jacob are not conſumed.* I ſay therefore again, If you would have ſetledneſſe of ſpirit, you muſt go out of your ſelves, and fetch peace of ſpirit out of God himſelfe: and I dare be bold to ſay, take all the ſweetneſſe and comfort of all the world, of all the creatures mixed together, extract the quinteſſence of their own excellencies, all theſe together ſhall never ſettle a heart, nor make it ſecure and free from fear, but only this propoſition, that God is their God. And by the fruit of this principle, a poor tottering ſpirit is under-propped, and under-ſet here with four pillars, at every corner one, as I may ſo ſay, *I am thy God, I am with thee; I will helpe thee, I will uphold the with the right*

right hand of my righteouſneſſe : or rather, there is one main principle, and three ſubordinate ſupporters affixed unto the main principle, for ſometimes you ſhall ſee great weights laid upon ſome great pillar, and for the better ſecuring of that which is laid upon it; you ſhall have ſome ſhort pillars branching out from the main, ſpread out wide, and ſo upholding. This preſent diſcourſe ſeems to be ſuch a main principle, that is, Gods being a God to ſuch a people, *I am thy God*, this is the foundation, this is the great pillar: *I am with thee, I will helpe thee, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſſe*; they are the three ſupporters that do iſſue out of this main principle; for they are all but branches flowing from this priviledge of Gods being your God. Theſe I ſay are ſufficient to keep the moſt tottering ſpirit in the world immovable, like *Mount Sion*, never to be removed. I ſhall take the Principle, the main ſupport, into task, at this preſent, and therein conſider what excellency of ſupport there is in it: *Fear not, I am with thee; be not diſmayed, I am thy God.*

In the handling of this, that you may the better ſee what ſtability there is for a tottering ſpirit in this ſupport, let us conſider:

Firſt, what it is for God to be thy God.

Secondly, what a perſon hath in this, who hath God for his God. Thirdly,

Thirdly, by way of answering objections, shew how it is so well with those that are the Lords, if this be true, that God himself is their God.

Fourthly, how God doth become their God, and upon what terms.

Fifthly, how God will be found of them to be so as he is become.

There are excellent usefulnesses if the truth be well sifted, and dived into.

I will begin with the first, what it is for God to be thy God.

There is much in it; nay, I will say more, there is more in it then is in any one thing, delivered in Scripture. I will go yet further, there is all in it that doth concerne the present and future wel-being and happinesse of a Believer, I say, all is in this one thing, *I am thy God.* While you have all things else but this, you have but the rayes of the Sun; while you have this, you have the Sun it self in his brightnesse, and glory, and lustre. But to cleer this thing a little, what it is for God to be thy God, or my God, you must not understand, that the Holy Ghost speaks here in the full collection of all, nor that he is to be understood as speaking in the plurall number, because he takes in the whole world, but he is to be understood, of all the members of Christ as one body, and also the

passage

paſſage is to be underſtood diſtributively, of every ſuch particular perſon, and ſo he is thy God, and my God, and their God, *I am their God*, is all one with, *I am thy God.* In the Scriptures you ſhall finde a moſt vaſt difference betweene God ſimply and abſtractively conſidered, and God relatively conſidered; and that we muſt note beforehand, that you may know wherein the ſtrength and comfort of this paſſage lyeth. For God to ſay, *Fear not, I am thy God*, is ten thouſand times more comfortable, and hath more in it, then ſimply for God to have ſaid, *Feare not, I am God.* I ſay, there is farre more ſtability and ſupport in this expreſſion of God, conſidered as our God, then as he is conſidered ſimply and abſtractively without relation to us, for ſo it imports only to us the incomprehenſible, perfect and compleat being of God, as he is in himſelf. But God conſidered in relation here, as he is thy God, imports to us, not only what God is in reſpect of his abſolute perfection and compleatneſſe, but what he is to thoſe perſons whoſe he is, ſo that the phraſe doth import, not only what God ſimply is, but alſo, that whatever he is, in and from himſelf, the ſame he is to thoſe perſons whoſe hee is. It is worth the obſervation, that the Scriptures plainly hold out, that when ever the Lord is ſpoken of in reference to wicked perſons,

ſons, God is never mentioned in way of relation of propriety unto them, but only as he is ſpoken of in reference to his owne people. You ſhall not finde in all the Scripture, God ſaid to be the God of any perſon that is a wicked man. But, leſt there be a miſtake, you muſt know that this relation of God to people, may be conſidered, either as common, or as ſpeciall and peculiar. It is true, take a Church, as it is mixed, ſo ſometimes the Lord is ſpoken of in relation to them: as for example, in the 20. Chapter of *Exodus*, *I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, and out of the houſe of bondage.* Here is God ſpoken of in relation, *I am the Lord thy God*; and this ſeems to be ſpoken collectively to the whole body of the Church, one with another; but alwayes obſerve this rule, Where the Lord is mentioned in relation to a mixed people, that is, a Church conſiſting of mixed perſons, all the priviledges from ſuch a relation of God, in reference to ſuch perſons, are but common priviledges: So in that very Text, *I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt*; Obſerve, he calls himſelf indeed, their God, take them conjunctively, one with another. But wherein their greateſt priviledge was, which they had, in having him their God, he expreſſeth thus: *I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of*

the

the Land of Egypt, which was but a common priviledge, and therefore, though God be said to be the God of people, being mixed, yet he is not to their God, as he is the God of his own people, the living members of Christ: those that are mixed, they receive some common propriety, or common things in that propriety; but they partake not of the whole propriety. Usually in Scripture, the phrase, *I am thy God*, is spoken only to the Lords servants, his chosen, that he will not cast off, and so it is to be understood in this Text, as it is in the words immediatly before the text: For you shall see that God speaks peculiarly of his own elect people, and saith of them, and to them; *Feare not, be not dismayed, I am thy God* &c. You shall finde, beloved, that the Lord doth frequently expresse himselfe, when he doth comfort and stay up his people, in this relation, as being the best motive that can be to uphold their spirits. In *Isa.* 50. 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that walke in darknesse, and seeth no light? let him rest in the name of the Lord, and stay himselfe upon his God.* Here is the very basis, the great pillar to bear up even in a state of darknesse, God is his God, let him stay himself upon him, because of this relation, *He is his God.* Beloved, a man that doth trust to another mans estate, he trusts to a broken staff, as we say, and may be deceived, except

that eſtate be made his owne: a childe of light can never be able to walke in darkneſſe, except hee have aſſurance that God is his God, by whom he ſtands: *God is my rock and my ſalvation* ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. [illegible].2. *Who is a rocke ſave our God?* Pſal. 18 31. So *Thomas* not being preſent when Chriſt did make it appear to the reſt, that he it was that ſuffered, and roſe againe, becauſe he would not beleeve Chriſt was riſen, he received this checke, *Becauſe thou haſt ſeen thou believeſt, bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed.* Now, *Thomas* having ſuch a checke what had he to reſt upon but this: *My Lord and my God?* When Chriſt ſeemed to be angry, he cloſed with this, *O God, thou art my God*, thou canſt not forſake me, thou canſt not be wanting to me, thou art my own.

It will be worth the while to conſider, what the Lords being a mans owne God is: *I am thy God.* The beſt way to ſet this out unto you, is to ſpeake as plainly as may be, even in the familiareſt way, by which you may reach ſomewhat the depth of this myſtery. I *am thy God*, is as much as to ſay, thou haſt a propriety in me: or I am thine owne, even as much thine owne as any goods, or any thing elſe in the world is thine; looke therefore what difference you may obſerve between theſe two things: Much treaſure, great revenews in generall, and thus much

treaſure

treaſure is mine, and this great revenew is mine and this land is mine, I ſay, what difference you obſerve between theſe two particulars, things ſimply conſidered, and things conſidered as yours; the ſame difference there is between God ſimply conſidered, and God conſidered as thine. You know what difference there is in the ſpirits of men, looking upon things in theſe two conſiderations. There is this difference in outward things, a poor man looks upon the riches and honours of great men with a wan heart, and uncomfortable ſpirit: Now the ground of it is this, he looks upon them as none of his own. Two malefactors are condemned to die, one hath a pardon ſent him, the other hath none: now look how theſe two perſons do differ, looking upon this one pardon, ſo are you to conceive of the difference between God ſimply being God, and God being their God. He whoſe the pardon is, can ſay, It is my pardon, Oh, his heart leaps within him, conceiting he hath found a ranſome, he hath received his life again, his heart is taken up infinitly in the conſideration of his pardon; But look upon the other man, he ſeeth the ſame pardon, and looks upon it with a trembling heart, and ſad ſpirit. Now all the difference of the caſe of theſe two perſons, depends upon the propriety in the one, and

want of propriety in the other: A wicked man ply may think of God simply as God, but he can wit never say, (til God reveal unto him that he is an him elect person) that God is his God, and think up- No on him as his own God, see then how much thy var case is better for thee to consider God as thine he then to consider him in himself, and how great goo thy priviledge is of having God to be thy God deb

But what kinde of propriety is it? I answer, mak thus much it imports, as much as when thou man sayest, that such money is thy money, or such and land is thy land. If you will have the nature his of propriety, in the 5. of the *Acts* and 4. verse, it be the Apostle will tell you in generall, what pro- he ca priety is: *The land* (speaking of that which was but sold by *Ananias*) *was it not thine own? When* is ab *it was sold, was not the money in thine owne power?* or w So then, for a man to have a thing as his owne, I do is to have it in his own power, to do with it as say, it is best, and most profitable for his own ad- fulfil vantage, to the utmost extent of the worth of from the thing: As for example, suppose a man hath need money in his purse, he wants bread, he hath troll this mony in his owne power to dispose of it hath for the supply of this want, and so in generall that he may make use of all his money for the sup- powe plying of all his wants: So Gods being a mans may own God, imports, that so far as God will go, abuse as I may so say, for a mans use, and for the sup- thing

ply

ply of all his neceſſities; ſo far he hath power with him, God himſelf is ingaged to give forth himſelf to the utmoſt for ſuch a mans good. Now, Gods All-ſufficiency reaches beyond all wants; ſo that he that hath God for his God, he hath him for all the uſes, that can be for his good. If a man be many hundred pounds in debt, and hath land that is his owne, he may make uſe of it for the beſt to make him a free man again, ingaged to none: He may ſell it, and diſpoſe of it as far as it will reach, to pay his debts, and to procure his diſcharge. But if it be another mans land, and not his own, then he cannot make uſe of it to pay his own debts, but muſt remain as he was before: So the Lord is able to make up every thing that is defective or wanting, to all that have propriety in him; I do not ſay that a man can ſell the Lord, but I ſay, ſo far as God can reach, with his All-ſufficiency, ſo far may I draw up from him, as from a well of ſalvation, whatſoever I ſtand in need of; The believer hath as free and uncontrollable right in God, being his owne, as hee hath in the money in his purſe, and the land that is his owne. The one is not more in his power then the other. It is true indeed, a man may abuſe his land or moneys, and ſo he may abuſe God too, but uſing things as men uſe things that are their own, that is, for their

beſt advantage, they have as much uſe and intereſt in God for the uſes they have occaſion to uſe him in, they have as much power with him as any thing in the world they conceive to be in their own power. When God gives gold and ſilver to men, he gives but ſome thick clay from himſelf, but when God communicates himſelfe, he gives all that he is; and he that hath God for his God, hath every thing that God is, or can doe. God can doe nothing in the world by his Omnipotent power, hee can deviſe nothing in the world by his infinite wiſdome, but all this is as much in propriety his, who hath God for his God, as it is Gods own. Gods propriety in himſelf, is but that he is his own; Gods peoples propriety in him is, that he is theirs. All the difference will be this: God in reſpect of himſelfe, hath the diſpoſing of himſelf by himſelf, and no other diſpoſeth of him but himſelf: As for the people of God, becauſe they know not how to diſpoſe of him, as I may ſay, to their beſt advantage; therefore hee is pleaſed to give out himſelf according to their ſeverall occaſions, as he in his wiſdome ſeeth moſt conducing to their good, and ſo doth it for them: As for example, a father hath an Inheritance of his own, the childe of this father hath land by inheritance too; now during minority, the childe is not capable to ma-

nage

nage it, now the one hath as much propriety in his land as the other, all the difference is this; the father diſpoſeth of his land for his own uſe himſelfe, the childe hath his land diſpoſed for his uſe by the father; but I ſay, the propriety is the ſame. So far as God may be uſefull for a creature, ſo far God is the creatures to doe good to the creature; I doe not ſpeak here according to the fooliſh fantaſie of ſome, nor conceive as if there were a tranſmutation of the creature into God, but I ſpeake of God in reſpect of his uſefulneſſe for accommodation, ſo far as it is poſſible for a creature to have him. He hath made over himſelfe in particular: man may have a propriety in God paſſed over unto him, as thoſe good things of God that we injoy are not tranſmuted into mans nature, nor is mans nature changed into that good; but ſo far as they may be uſefull to him, or ſo far as they may conduce to his welfare, ſo far he may make uſe of them: So when God is thy God, ſo far as he may be uſefull to thy good, ſo far he is as much thine, as any one thing in the world is thine. Be it far from thee therefore, to think that God is able to do thus and thus, and to do good in ſuch and ſuch a caſe, and yet I cannot, I ſhall not have God for ſuch a good to my ſelfe; this man that ſo thinketh muſt needs conclude, God is not his God. Was it ever

heard, that a man had money in his purſe, and yet wanted bread, and did periſh for want of bread, except there were no bread to be had, to be bought for money? So this is to deny the All-ſufficiency of God to think that he cannot, that he will not ſupply us with all needful bleſſings: Aſſure your ſelves as God is your owne, ſo as far as may be for your good, you have him as much as any thing that is yours; only you have not the diſpoſing of him to your ſelves and for your ſelves, but that he hath in truſt for you. And this will ſerve to give a hint by way of anſwer to ſome queſtions by and by. Thus conſidering what men have, in having God let us now take it into our conſideration, what the ſtock and treaſure is, in having him to be our God. It is true, there are ſome things, in which creatures have propriety, and yet are little the better for them, in that the things they have propriety in, are not of ſufficiency: A woman may have propriety in a Husband, and yet ſhe may be a begger, if he be a begger; ſhe can have no more then he hath; therefore propriety ſimply is no comfort, but the nature of the thing wherein there is propriety: If God bee an empty and ſcant propriety, then there were but little comfort in having God himſelfe: but mark, God that doth make himſelf over in covenant, the God of ſuch a people,

is

is the greateſt, richeſt, moſt incomprehenſible treaſure that can be. You have heard of ſome, that have been raiſed from beggers, to huge and mighty eſtates, they have been had in admiration, that they ſhould be made ſo rich. What ſhould the ſons of men do, if they were able to apprehend what infinite ſuperlative treaſure they have all at once caſt upon them, when God caſts himſelf upon them. Beloved, I do conceive it a matchleſſe mercy of God, that he doth reveal but glimmeringly for the preſent, and ſome ſmatch of the treaſure that we have in him for certainly the over-brightnes, & the over-excellency of that fulnes, he gives unto us in himſelfe, would twallow us up, we ſhould not b able to endure the glory of it, if the Lord ſhould reveal all unto us: and that is the reaſon wherefore we know but in part now, becauſe we ſhould be confounded in the knowledge of all that is to be known, and all what God is to his own people. There are three particulars whereby ſpecially you may obſerve what great treaſure people have in having God to be their God.

1. In regard of the quality of the treaſure.
2. In regard of the vertue of this treaſure.
3. In regard of the ſoveraignty and the univerſality and variety of helpfulneſſe in this treaſure.

First,

First, in regard of the quality of the treasure: men may have many things, which may be of little worth, for want of excellency of quality: There is a great deal of difference between a heap of Dust in propriety, and a heap of Diamonds; he that hath one, may be a begger, and the others having the same quantity, is the richest man in the world: So we having propriety in God, are the richest persons in heaven or earth, by reason of the excellencies that are in him. Some men have not many acres of land, but those few acres they have, in regard of the riches of them, are more worth then many millions of other acres: One acre, as I may say, of propriety in the Lord, is worth a thousand of the richest proprieties in the world. I say, so rich is God, and every thing that is in him. All things that are given to injoy, they are but beams of this Sun of righteousnesse, and if there be so much glory in the beams, what is there in the body of the Sun it self? *David*, when he considered the countenance of the Lord, and the superlative excellencies that are therein, he breaks out into admiration of the excellency of it: *There be many* (saith he in the 4 *Psal.*) *which say, Who will shew us any good? but Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us; and thou shalt put more gladnesse into my heart, then when their corne, and wine, and oyle increase.*

Marke,

Marke, while others look for good, he looks for the light of Gods countenance; when others looke for wine, and oyle, he looks for Gods gracious countenance, and having that, he lyes downe and ſleeps, as one filled and ſatiated. There is abundance of treaſure and ſuperlative excellency in God; ſilver and gold are not to be compared untohim; Nay, the Apoſtle *Peter* comparing of *ſilver* and *gold* unto Chriſt, ſaith, they are but *corruptible things* in reſpect of Chriſts blood: how much more is God himſelfe, whereunto Chriſts blood is but the means? now the means is ſubordinate unto the end for which it is a means. If then the blood of Chriſt be ſo precious, that ſilver and gold are but corruptible things in compariſon of it, what is God, that the blood of Chriſt brings us unto?

Secondly, conſider the *vertue* of it: for God to be the God of people. Many things are of worth in the world, that are of little vertue in themſelves; many things are worth a thouſand pound in reſpect of their value, but when they come to uſe, and to afford vertue, they are but dry things, and unprofitable, they can never cure the ſick, nor warm the cold, nor recover the weak; ſuch are gold and ſilver in themſelves, they can afford the weak heart no nouriſhment, they have none in them. A little bread

bread in the houſe, in a famine, is worth a houſe full of ſilver; ſo God, being your God, if there were no operation & ſuitablenes in him, and a kinde of fulneſſe to ſupply your wants, then your propriety in him were much the leſſe conſiderable. But you ſhall finde the Lord is not more rich then he is full of vertue unto all thoſe to whom he is a God: The quinteſſence of all vertues are in him, all the vertues of the world are but beams that proceed from him, they are but fruit that drops from him, he is the root, from which all vertue is derived. The vertue of Phyſick is more eminent in God that gives power to the Phyſicke, therefore God muſt needs be in head of all theſe, and in the room of them, and abundantly ſupply the want of all. It was an excellent ſpeech of a woman which lived in Queene *Maries* dayes, from whom, becauſe of her courage for the truth, they would take away her bread, to whom ſhe anſwered, That if they took away her bread, God wou'd take away her ſtomach. There is ſuch an uſefulneſſe in God, that hee ſerves for all the neceſſities in the world: And conſider this more fully, obſerve the variety of uſes that there are in God, to all that he is a God unto all; all manner of plenty, all ſorts of plenty and variety are compriſed in him. Reckon up all the wants men are ſubject unto, ma-

ny

ny Phyſitians and Chirurgions have dived into the ſeverall and various kindes of diſeaſes incident unto the body of man; but ſuppoſe every creature ſhould ſit down, to caſt up every particular diſeaſe, or want that it is ſubject to, or any one of his kind, it would make up more Volumes then are yet in the world, by ſetting down particularly every defect that is incident to the whole creation one time or other: yea, were the wants multiplied to infinite millions more then they are indeed, yet there is ſuch variety of help and ſupply in God, and ſuch plenty in all thoſe ſeverall varieties, as that there is no infirmity, no diſeaſe, no lack, but there is a fulneſſe of re-lief for it in God, eſpecially to his people, after he is become their God: for all this vertue he puts forth in their behalf who are his, and whom he is, ſo far as it may be for their good. As for the quantity of goodneſſe and treaſure that is in God, the truth is, beloved, it is not to be expreſſed: the word *quantity*, is but a repreſentative word, to ſet out how much uſefulneſſe and helpe there is in God to our apprehenſion; for *quantity* hath dimenſions and bounds, and are, and may bee compaſſed, but there is no bounds of helpfulneſſe in God, there is no want upon you, but we may ſay of you as of a Map, the Map may be but the bredth of a mans hand, and yet it deſcribes countreys

th a

that are of vaſt circumference. Beloved, you are the Image of God, it is true; but yet you are the Image of God as in a little Map, that hath the world incloſed in it: God is an infinite vaſtneſſe, far above your capacity, be you as empty as the creature may be, you are but as a Nut-ſhell, to be filled with the waters of the whole Ocean. God is an Ocean of treaſure and goodneſſe, to fill you up with this treaſure, is to fill a Nut-ſhell with the Sea; the truth is beloved, the Lord is ſo full, that much of this fulnes goes by a flood-gate, as I may ſo ſpeak, becauſe there is more then will run through thy Mill, but ſtill there is as much as will fill it, and keep it in a perpetuall motion, never to ſtand ſtill: Art thou ſick? God hath health in him art thou poor? God hath wealth in him: Art thou in any extremity? God is a Comforter, he is the God of all conſolation; Art thou at thy wits ends? his wiſdome is infinite; Art thou weak? he is omnipotent: there is no diſeaſe nor infirmity, but remedy is moſt plentifully with him.

Object. But ſome will ſay, Is the propriety ſuch in God, and is God ſo abundant to thoſe that have propriety in him? How commeth it then to paſſe, that thoſe whoſe God he is, are ſo far to ſeek as they are, for many things that their God can ſupply them with, having many things in himſelfe that they want? How many

are

are the complaints? How many are the things that they want, that God could supply? It seems therefore, that there is not such propriety as that he is, or may be so usefull to his people, and that they may have power of it.

Answ. For answer to that, let me tell you, that there is nothing in God, wherein he may be usefull for the good of a person, but the Lord doth powre out himselfe into this person, and is never wanting nor lacking to him: there is nothing thou complainest of, that God doth not afford thee out of himself: but it is not good for thee, that thou shouldest alwayes have those things which thou thinkest thou wantest: it is no infringing of propriety, to with-hold from a man some things, at some times, that are his owne: As for instance, suppose a man be in a desperate humour to kill himself, and draw his owne sword to run himself thorow, he is but a sorry friend, that will let a man have his owne sword to do himself a mischief. Suppose a father of an unthrifty son hath an estate of this childs in his hands, because the estate is the childes, were it wisdome in the father to let him have the ordering and disposing of this estate, to waste it unthriftily and unprofitably? were it not the property of a wise father, to keep it for better uses and purposes for his son? There is nothing that the Lord

Lord doth hold from his owne people, to whom he gave up himſelfe, but that which in the uſe thereof would do them more hurt then good.

Obiect. Yea, but peradventure you will ſay, you doe not ſpeake of ſuch things that God might afford that will do us hurt, but to thoſe that God hath given himſelf unto, there are wanting many things that would be very good for them, they are very much diſtreſſed, and God hath in him that which will eaſe them; they ſeek to God for it, and they cannot finde redreſſe, though it be in God. If God be ſo beneficiall, then why cannot they have that is good for them out of him?

Anſw. I anſwer, there is nothing that is good, but you have it out of him: Let me tell you, beloved, you are not alwayes fit to be judges what is good for you, of thoſe things that God hath in ſtore for his people. A man may be in a diſtemper, and may judge amiſſe: You know when a man is ſick of an Ague, hee may exceedingly crave and deſire drink, he may ſhake, and he may aſk for that that is his owne in his ſickneſſe, and yet for all this greedineſſe of his it is a loving wifes duty to keep this drink from him, till the wiſe Phyſitian permit; thus would it be with us. If the Lord ſhould give us thoſe things that we think good

we

we ſhould ſoon bring an old houſe over our heads, as they ſay.

Object. But ſome will be ready to ſay, There are ſome things that are good for me, and I have them not.

Answ. Let them be what you can imagine, let others judge ſo as well as you, yet I ſhall ſtand to this, as I ſaid before, and make it good, that there is nothing in the world that is truly good for the faithfull, that God with-holds from them to whom he hath given himſelf, let it be never ſo ſpeciall a gift, it is not good at that time, for that perſon from whom it is with-held: For inſtance, ſome will be ready to ſay, the thing that I want is this, I have a ſtony and hard heart, and fain would I have a heart of fleſh. I anſw. I have a dead and wandering ſpirit in Gods ſervice, and fain would I have a ſetled ſpirit, fain would I have a cheerfull heart, and free ſpirit, are not theſe good for me, will you ſay? And yet I ſeek God for theſe many times, and having God, they are mine owne it ſeems, becauſe they are in God, and he himſelf is mine. How can God be ſaid to be my God, and all he is, and hath, to be mine, and I cannot come at theſe good things which are in him, and are ſo needfull for me?

I anſwer: Firſt, that God in giving himſelf unto perſons, gives himſelf to be communicated

unto them at ſundry ſeaſons, and in divers kindes and meaſures, and yet ſo, that he will be Judge of the fitneſſe of the time. The queſtion then will be this; Is it ſoftneſſe, or more ſoftneſſe of heart you ſeek for? Is it a largeneſſe, or more largeneſſe of heart you ſeek? I mean this, that which you ſeek and inquire after from God as your God; is it ſomething you have nothing of? or, is it for more of ſomething you have already? If you ſay, it is ſomething I have nothing at all of: I have a ſtony heart, and I have no ſoftneſſe at all in it. That is falſe, there can be no ſeeking of God, where there is no ſoftneſſe, and all hardneſſe: for the Lord muſt firſt ſoften the heart to ſeek him. But you conceive there is no ſoftneſſe at all, becauſe the apprehenſion of that which is wanting, ſwallows up that which is injoyed, and the want of that which you have not, ſwallows up that you have. Is it more that you would have in reſpect of meaſure? But you will ſay, Is it not good for me, though I have a little ſoftneſſe, to have more; and when I have a little ſpirituality, to have more enlargedneſſe of ſpirit then I have? Is not this good for me?

I anſwer: You muſt diſtinguiſh of time, God doth not ſee it better at this inſtant, that thou ſhouldeſt have more ſoftneſſe of heart then thou haſt, and this I am bold to affirm, if the Lord

Lord did himſelfe judge it were better thou ſhouldeſt be more ſpirituall at this inſtant, beloved, I ſpeake of a perſon to whom God gives himſelf, he would not detaine nor with-hold it at all from thee: Mark it well, you ſhall find, that all the ſpirituality belonging to a Chriſtian, is the meer gift of God to him, and onely at the diſpoſing of God upon him, and without the leave of the creature, hee may make whom he will partaker of it, and in what meaſure he thinks meet; ſo that the creature can enjoy no more of ſpirituality then God will give him, ſo runs the Covenant, that you may not think that your ſpirituality depends upon your ſelves, and the putting forth of your ſelves for it: *A new ſpirit will I put within thee, and a new heart will I give thee; and I will take away thy ſtony heart, and give thee a heart of fleſh; and I will write my Law in thy inward parts, and I will put my feare into thy heart; and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people, and I will remember their ſinnes no more*: here is the concluſion, now how ſhall men come by it? muſt it not be of his own good pleaſure, and is it not as he hath freely paſſed the donation of it? he gives it, and he gives it freely; he doth not in this Covenant condition with men in any one particle, as a condition to get any thing to our ſelves. Marke the Covenant well, where ever

it is, whether in the 33. of *Jeremiah*, and the 31. *verse*, or in the 36. of *Ezekiel*, or in the 8. to the *Hebrews*, where the Covenant is again and again recited marke it, there is not one clause of the Covenant, that God will have men doe this and that good: God doth not put them upon the bringing of any one thing in all the world to make up the Covenant, but all that is required of the person covenanted withall, the Lord is bound to make good all those things to that person. Now, if so be the Lord did see more of these spirituall enlargements requisite for thy use, he that hath made such a solemne engagement of himselfe for the performance of all that is to be wrought in thee in the Covenant, would not with-hold that at this instant from thee; thou knowest not what a corrupt use thou at such a time mightst make of them; for some through more abundance of spirituality and spirituall enlargements have abused them, to grow more proud and scornfull; *Paul* met with such, to whom being puffed up with pride, saith he, *What hast thou that thou hast not received? wherefore then boastest thou?* Beloved, your owne experience may witnesse: Look into the world, you shall finde some persons more eminent in spiritualnesse, there is more abundance of pride in those persons: As for example, you shall finde some more

more excellent in prayer, ſome more excellent in other gifts, what follows? The corruption in the heart of man gathers ſuch corrupt inferences from hence, that pride riſeth in the heart from ſuch parts, that another Saint, becauſe he hath a ſtammering tongue, though equally ſound hearted with himſelf, yet is not fit for ſuch a ones company. God is a wiſe God, he knowes the meaſure and proportion that is fit for every member of Jeſus Chriſt, and that proportion hee doth not with-hold. I ſpeake not this with any intent, but that people ſhould ſtill riſe to as much as can be attained, but that people ſtill preſſe hard to the marke of the price of the high calling of God in Jeſus Chriſt. Beloved, when we ſeeke God in his owne way for increaſe of any good, for ſoul or body, let us ſtand to Gods good pleaſure; and, beloved, for incouragement, let mee tell you, if ever the Lord would have with-held any thing for the ſinfulneſſe of his creatures, he would have with-held the gift of his owne Son, but while we were enemies, Chriſt dyed for us, would not God ſpare his owne Son, but deliver him up for us all, while wee were enemies: ſeeing the delivering up of his Chriſt, was for the good of his people, will he now detaine ſmall things, in compariſon of him, in conſideration of weakneſſes in us? Marke the

Apoſtles words, he that ſpared not his owne Son, but delivered him up to death for us, how will he not with him give us all things that are good for us? as if he had ſaid, Thou poore wretch, wanteſt ſuch and ſuch ſpirituality, thou ſeekeſt them, and thou canſt not find them, and by and by thou cryeſt out, that ſuch and ſuch ſins hinder God, that he will not give thee ſuch grace as thou needeſt, and at laſt, thou queſtioneſt, whether God did give thee Chriſt, or no; Nay, when thou wert viler then now thou art, thy vileneſſe then did not hinder, but that hee freely gave his Son for thee, thy vileneſſe much leſſe ſhall hinder thee now, to bar from thee thoſe ſpirituall gifts that God intends to give to thee. Here objections ſtart up, this is the way to make perſons ſlack duties, and to bee careleſſe: but if we would preach that God will not give till we mend our ſelves, and leave our ſins, were not this a far better way to put men upon it then thus to preach? let me tel you, we muſt not be more wiſe then God, that all that the creature hath, might appear to be from the grace of God, and ſo he have the praiſe of the glory of his owne grace; I ſay again, it is no ſinfulneſſe in the creature ſhall hinder Gods communicating ſo much of his Spirit as hee ſeeth uſefull to creatures, and he will take order that they ſhall not take a licentious liberty

to

to go on in ſin, or neglect ſeeking God, becauſe they know it is not their ſeeking makes God anſwer for what they want; for it is not your amending nor reforming, that gets God to communicate more to you, but that he doth it, is meerly for his own ſake, from his meer motion, out of his meer compaſſion, the riches of which was purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt, this is the only ſpring and fountain that brings forth to you the fulneſſe of God in ſuch meaſure as you have; as he is yours, ſo whatſoever in him is fit for you in ſeaſon, he ſhall ceaſe to be his owne, when he ceaſes to be yours, and therefore, beloved, I ſhall beſeech you, that you will not ſtumble at God himſelfe, as if he were ſo humorous and peeviſh, that every little thing, not that any ſin is in its owne nature little, but comparatively, every infirmity and failing, ſhould make him pull his hands into his boſome, and refuſe to give his grace; the Lord from all eternity, determined what to give to every Saint, and had every act of every Believer before his eyes; ſo that if they would have been provocations to him to keep his gifts he ſhould never have beſtowed any upon him. But I muſt tell you, it is the foundation of all our comfort in all our failings in this life, that there is nothing that we enjoy from God, but what was appointed us before, and no ſin is

committed, but what was from eternity before God, and if any ſin ſhould have hindered God, he would never have ſet down ſo fully and graciouſly what he would do; ſo that if the Lord hath already manifeſted the greatneſſe of his purpoſe and love, by communicating himſelfe to you, aſſure your ſelfe, this being eſtabliſhed, nothing in the world ſhall hinder the communication of any thing whatſoever, that may make for your good. Well, let us go a little further, and conſider how God doth become the God of people. I muſt tell you, that for lack of cleer diſtinguiſhing between theſe two things, how he doth become theirs, and how he is to be theirs, the confounding of theſe that are ſo diſtinct, occaſions a great deal of confuſion in the minds of men, for theſe two go al for one but you ſhall ſee the difference of them, and the different principle from whence they flow.

First, how doth God come to bee the God of people? You will ſay this is of great uſe, it is worth the hearing, let it coſt what it will, to have God for my owne: but I ſay, there is no more treaſure in God to be for our uſe, then it is free to; I ſay, the gift of God for our own God, is as cheap as it is rich. God never looks the creature ſhould bring any thing that he might procure of God to be his God, but we do partake of this meerly and properly

from

from the pleaſure of his own will. I ſay, there is originally and efficiently, no other motive, nor nothing concurring to make him our God, but only the good pleaſure of his owne will, he would do, and he would do it ſimply for his own ſake; and therefore it is ſo. Beloved, look but upon the creatures, God communicates and gives his Image only to the ſons of men, *Let us make man after our own Image*: How doth man thus become partaker of the Image of God, more then the reſt of the creatures? You may plainly ſee, there is nothing in man himſelf, nor in any other creature, that procures this priviledge to him. Man was made but of one common lump with other creatures, he was made of the ſame materials, even that Toads and Spiders were. Now, that which was the cauſe, why man had the Image of God, and no other creature, the ſame is the cauſe why Believers have God given up, and God given up to bee their God, and the reaſon of both is from the good pleaſure of God. It is true, there is a propriety of land many times made over unto perſons, in reſpect of amiablenes or deſert conceived to be in theſe perſons, & ſo it is conferred unto them; but in Gods conferring himſelfe to the ſons of men, there could not be ſuch motives in theſe creatures. The ground is this: if any thing could be a motive to the Lord, it muſt be the

moſt

moſt excellent thing the creature hath ſince the fall, their faſting, and prayer, and mourning, and weeping, and ſelf-deniall, and mortification, and cleanſing of themſelves, and amending, and the like: but it was impoſſible, beloved, there ſhould be any motive, out of any of all theſe things, for God to communicate himſelf, and to give himſelfe over to people; for all theſe performances, and what ever elſe are in man, they are but branches that iſſue from this main root, Gods being their God. If they be ſpirituall gifts, they iſſue out of this principle [*God is our God*]; there is no man that believeth, that faſteth, that prayeth, that mourneth in a truly gracious manner, but God is firſt his God, and being his God, doth communicate theſe things to him. How can that then be a motive to God, to communicate himſelf to men, that is not in man till he hath communicated himſelfe? And indeed, is but the iſſue of that communion that he hath afforded unto men? So then, I ſay, it is impoſſible that God ſhould fetch any argument, or any motive to make himſelfe our God, from what wee do. And if wee could do any ſuch thing, yet there cannot be any moving power in ſuch performances, to obtaine God for our God; for in the very beſt of our performances, there is unrighteouſneſſe, there is filthineſſe;

nay,

nay, the Prophet ſaith, *that all our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags*, ſweet motives to prevail with God, for ſuch a gift as to communicate himſelf. No, beloved, it is not what we do, but what he in his own thoughts hath freely determined to do for us.

Object. But you will ſay, Chriſt makes God to be our God.

Anſ. I anſwer, beloved, in ſome ſenſe, that is true, but as I ſaid before, originally, Chriſt doth not make God to be our God Give me leave to open this clearly unto you, for I muſt tell you, that Chriſt himſelf is marvellous chary, and wary, not to aſſume, or take to himſelf that which belongs unto his Father, nor ſhould wee give to Chriſt himſelf that which belongs unto God peculiarly, as giving Chriſt himſelf unto us. Chriſt ſaith, *Give to* Ceſar *the things that are* Ceſars, *and to God the things that are Gods*; and this holds as true between God and Chriſt, as Mediator, Give unto God the things that are his, and to Chriſt the things that are his: For our Saviour, in *John* 17. at the beginning of the Chapter ſaith, ſpeaking to the Father in prayer, *I have finiſhed the worke that thou haſt given me to doe*: What worke was that? towards the latter end of the Chapter you ſhall finde; *As thou Father art one in mee, and I in thee: ſo alſo they may bee one in us*; as much as to ſay, that

thou

thou mightest communicate thy selfe to them: observe it, Christ doth professe, that it is the work that his Father hath given him to do, that he did not put himselfe upon it originally, but the Father did put him upon it. The truth is, the meer good pleasure of God, contriving, determining, and ordaining this communicating of himselfe, was the first originall and ground that Christ was sent into the world, that hee was conceived in the womb of a Virgin, &c. And the Lord by the obedience and righteousnesse of Christ, hath actually brought all the benefits of the Gospel upon us, to which end Christ hath done this work: But the first conception of it, and the foundation of it, was the thing by which he was Christ and Mediator; and therefore Christ could not be the originall of that eternall decree and purpose of God to communicate himself to us, for the execution whereof Christ was sent into the world. The Schooles have a rule, that the end of a thing is first intended, though it be last in execution: so this, that God would communicate himself to the sons of men, being the end for which Christ was sent, though till Christ had by vertue of his death made way, there was no actuall communion, yet still it was the end of Christs coming into the world, it was in the mind of God before the means was in being. Therefore if

you

you will have God to be your God, you muſt not thinke that ſuch and ſuch things will make God to be yours. Nothing will get God to be yours, but his owne free motion from himſelfe by his Son.

Secondly, there is a way by which God is found to be the God of ſuch people: now theſe things being confounded together, put people into a labyrinth, thinking the way to find God, and to get God, is all one; now, although it is the meer good pleaſure of God himſelf, that doth beſtow himſelfe upon us; yet he is pleaſed to chalk out a way, whereby he may be found to be our God, and that we may find him to be ſo, we muſt meet God in thoſe wayes he uſeth to be met in.

But you will ſay, How doth God uſually manifeſt himſelfe, and how is he found of his people to be theirs?

I anſwer, there is an efficient of our finding out of God, or a paſſive inſtrument of finding him out; the way of finding out of God efficiently to be our God, is the Spirit of the Lord, acquainting the ſpirits of men with the minde of the Lord. I ſay, he is the efficient. All the world is not able to work any impreſſion upon the ſpirit of a man, that the Lord is his God, but only the Spirit of the Lord, muſt perſwade the ſpirit of man, that he may receive this

this principle. It is true indeed, the Spirit of the Lord doth it according to the word of Grace, and ſpeaks no more to the ſpirit of a man, but what is in the word of Grace; but the word of Grace it ſelfe doth not of it ſelfe work this impreſſion, that God is my God, or thy God, but the impreſſion is wrought by the Spirit of the Lord.

Obiect. What ſerve all the Ordinances for, will you ſay? is not here a crying down of Ordinances? There will bee ſtill this ſcandall caſt upon us: But let me tell you, there is a moſt comfortable uſe of Ordinances, though they ſerve not to ſuch high purpoſes as theſe are: I ſay, though they are not efficient to beget, and finde out, and reveale to the ſpirits of men the things that concerne God: yet beſides the efficient revelation of God to be our God from the Spirit alone, there is a paſſive inſtrument, by which the Lord doth make himſelfe knowne to be the God of his people, but that way is meerly paſſive, and not active.

Firſt, paſſively God makes himſelf knowne to be the God of his people, by the word of his Grace, and Faith laying hold upon the word of Grace revealed, and more ſubordinately in Prayer, Faſting, receiving of the Lords Supper, and ſuch Ordinances, ſo far as they are mixed with

with faith. Now give me leave in a few words to communicate unto you the full uſe and utmoſt extent of Gods thoughts, concerning the Ordinances that he hath propounded, how far forth he would have the creature look upon the Ordinances, and as much as may be, put upon the uſe of them, ſo farre forth as they are uſefull. Know therefore, as I ſaid before, that all theſe Ordinances are but paſſive wayes of conveying this great Gift, the knowledge of God to bee our God. I mean more plainly thus: Theſe Ordinances, are only of, and in themſelves, empty dry chanels, or pipes, through which the Spirit of the Lord brings from God himſelfe the Spring, theſe riches, and conveyes the ſame into the ſpirit of a man: Look as a chanell digged in a dry ground, is the way through which the Spring conveyes his water into a Ciſterne, the chanell it ſelfe communicates none of its own, only it is a paſſage, through which the Spring conveys his water: ſo are all the Ordinances, even Faith it ſelf, Prayer, and all other ſervices, they are but chanels, through which the Spirit of the Lord paſſeth, and bringeth from the Lord himſelfe (the Spring and Fountain) the revelation of God to be our God. In all the reſt of the gifts of God, which hee hath ſo freely beſtowed, never a gift of Gods Spirit pro-

procures any thing of its own, our faith hath nothing of its own, fasting, and prayer have nothing of their owne, but as the Lord hath been pleased to make these Ordinances to be passages to convey himself to the sons of men, and so they are to bee made use of by the sonnes of men: Faith, as it apprehendeth the Lord Jesus, and other Ordinances as therein true faith is exercised, and no otherwise. And indeed, beloved, this is the load-stone to provoke persons to the use of all Ordinances, God hath ranked them together, that the Lord hath so much, and so often promised through them, to convey himselfe: *You are kept by the power of God through faith* (saith the Apostle) *unto salvation.* As if he should have said, The Lord doth convey himself, and the manifestation of his owne salvation through our beleeving. The Spirit of the Lord passing through the Ministery of the Gospel, as the breath of man passeth through a Trumpet; the Trumpet is the instrument, the breath is the Spirit of the Lord, the Trumpet addes nothing to the breath. Now know, beloved, so far as you will attend the Ordinances, because God calls out to Ordinances, and because you have heard the Lord promise to bestow such things upon you in the Ordinances, so far you shall attend the Ordinances according to his pleasure,

ſure; but when you aſcend ſo high, that the Ordinance doth get things, then you rob the Lord, and give more to Ordinances than God hath given; now, though the Ordinances have no efficiency of their own, in that nature I have ſpoken, yet there is good cauſe for all Gods own people to eſteem very highly of Ordinances, and to be joyfull of Ordinances, and to long much after Ordinances, to make much of them: For why? the Lord hath made his promiſes to be found of them, and to be with them in Ordinances. *In the day of adverſity, call thou upon me; and I will deliver thee.* And here by the way, know from hence what is the exſpectatiō of Believers themſelves, which they ought to have of the Lord, for ſuch things, when they come to ſuch Ordinances: that ſo, when wee attend the Lord in his Ordinances, we may find him in them. In *Ezekiel* you ſhall find, there was a conſtant motion, but it was becauſe there was a ſpirit ſtirring in the wheels; theres no motion in the heart of man nor ordinances in the world, but as the Spirit of the Lord is in them. The Lord hath promiſed to meet with us in theſe Ordinances, or elſe they would be as dry as any thing in the world. Therefore as the poor man lay at the beautifull gate of the Temple, not becauſe the gate would relieve him, but becauſe it was a place of concourſe,

where honourable men reſorted, from whom he might have almes: So in the Miniſtery, in Faſting, and Prayer, and all other ſervices, there is the gate of the Temple of the Lord, there is the place God makes uſually his concourſe and reſort, there is the place God appoints to give the meeting; therefore, in expectation from the word of his grace, that wee may finde him in Ordinances we do reſort to them. Now, what derogation is there all this while to the Ordinances, while wee make them but thus paſſive? The richeſt treaſure in the world may come to a man, through the pooreſt veſſell; the treaſure is never the farther off, nor never the worſe, becauſe the veſſell is poor. It is no matter of what price the means of conveyance is, ſo that the thing wee deſire be conveyed to us by it, only we muſt not give it that which is above its due. To aſcribe the obtaining of theſe things to Prayer, and Ordinances, that is, to make gods of them, if wee think any thing ſhall move the Lord, but his bowels in Chriſt, you invert the courſe of the Goſpel. The Lord ſaith, *I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my name ſake* That which God doth to man, is done to them for his own ſake. He will not be ſo much bound to any creature, as to fetch the leaſt motive from the creature, to do good to it. Look therefor

as you would speed, wait upon the Lord, where he saith, you shall speed.

And this shall be encouragement sufficient, to wait upon all Ordinances, or all sorts, where the Lord appoints; that he will for his own sake give you a gracious answer, and bestow all good things upon you, that you stand in need of, in Ordinances; this is motive sufficient, I say, to stir you up to attend upon Ordinances, and yet not to make gods of them, to ascribe that to them, which belongs alone to God, who doth all ordinarily through Ordinances, which is the only way to disappoint you of your hope, when you expect help from them.

Object. But what is all this to fasting, will you say?

Answ. This is a day of fasting, why do you fast, you stand in need of other things? If you consider the nature of fasting aright, you shall find there is nothing more proper for this day, then this thing, God to be thy God, to keep thee from fear, What is the end of fasting but this, to get a prop and support from sinking, by reason of approaching evills? Who knowes, whether the Lord will repent and leave a blessing behinde, saith *Joel*, when he proclaimed the day of a fast? then to finde the Lord with his hands full of blessings, is the end of a Fast.

Now, if you will finde the Lord *your God*, you shall finde the utmost that you can in fasting, for in him you will finde that which will stay, and support you, when greatest extremities grow upon you. Therefore I have no more to say to you, beloved, but only to commend this work to the Grace of God, and to the power of his Spirit, that is able to fasten it upon your spirits for your everlasting comfort.

SERMON

SERMON III.

1 John 2. verſ. 1, 2.

My little children, theſe things I write unto you, that you ſin not: And if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins, and not for our ſins only, but for the ſins of the whole world.

OF all the Prophets, *Daniel* alone had this prerogative, to be called, *The greatly beloved of the Lord*; you may finde it in the 9th of *Daniel*. And this greatneſſe of his indearedneſſe was expreſſed in the manifeſtation of the greatneſs of the riches of the Goſpel unto him in a more ſingular manner than to others. So the Lord doth expreſſe it by his Angel: *Thou art greatly beloved of the Lord therefore am I come to tell thee, that ſeventy weeks are determined upon thy people,*

and one, City to finish transgressions, and to put an end to sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. And among all the Apostles and Disciples that conversed with Christ, but Disciple *John* had the priviledge which *Daniel* had among the Prophets, to be called *The beloved of the Lord; the beloved Disciple.* And as an argument of that he is admitted to lie in the bosome of Christ. And of all the Apostles that conversed with Christ, you shall finde none of them hit so upon the great Grace of God to the sons of men, as this Apostle doth, compare the Gospel which he wrote with other Evangelists writings, you shall finde a vast difference between the manifestation of the free grace of God to them and to this Apostle. His drift in writing this Epistle, follows the same drain therein; in the former Chapter, he delivers unto us two admirable passages, the one is, *The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins*; and the other is, *He is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins:* two great manifestations of the absolute freeness of the Grace of God to the sons of men. Now, this Apostle, in the 4. verse of the first Chapter declares one main end, for which he doth publish this free grace of God: *I write these things*, saith he, *that your joy may be full*: implying, that there is fulnesse of joy in the Grace here revealed

veared, and it is fit, that little children that have fellowship with the Father, and the Son, should have the knowledge of this excellent Grace of God, *that their joy may be full.*

Now, whereas he speaks of Gods forgiving freely, he would not have people mistake, as if his revealing of pardon of sin, did intimate, that people did not sin any more. And therefore he anticipates it in the 8. *verse*, *If any man say he hath no sin, he deceiveth himself, and there is no truth in him.*

Sin we do, but the grace of God stands in this, that when we sin, sin is forgiven, and it is an act of justice for God to forgive these sins that are committed. Beloved, I perceive the world clamours extremely against that, in consideration of the sinfull fruits (as they conceive) of such publishing the Grace of God to men. Tell men their sins are forgiven, tell them whatsoever sins they do commit, being Believers, their sins shall do them no hurt: This is the way, say they, to all manner of licentiousness, this brings Libertinisme into the world, this opens the flood-gates for floods of sins to overflow the Church. But the Apostle prevents this great objection, and he doth not only prevent it, but he establishes the direct contrary to the inference men make from the free Grace of God. And this he doth in the words of my

Text. And observe it well, were it not an Apostle of Christ that spake these words, there are many Zelots in the Church would condemn it, not only for Heresie, but for the greatest absurdity in the world. This appears plain, for there are two things the Apostle drives at, in these two verses.

First, an inforcement of something that he would work upon little children, as he calls them, that have fellowship with the Father and the Son.

Secondly, the great argument the Apostle useth to prevaile with them to entertain and imbrace that which hee would fasten upon them.

The thing that the Apostle would fasten upon believers was, *that they would not sin.* For which cause he writes these things to them. The argument by which he would prevail with them to do this he calls upon them for, is a strange one in the opinion of most men. Observe the argument: *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father,* &c. Put them together, and it amounts to this; I would have you not to sin. Now, the only way, and the best way, to prevail with you not to sin, is this, I will acquaint you with this truth, that if you do commit sin, there is an advocate with the Father, that shal take order that the sin you commit shal do you no

no hurt at all. Though you do sin, he is become the propitiation for your sins; therefore feare not, though you doe sin, of any hurt that can come to you by these sins. So that this is the argument by which he would prevail with them, and us against the commission of sin. Now, what an absurd argument seems this to be, not only to the world, but even to zealous professors also, to prevail with men to the forbearance of sin, to tell them before hand, that if they sin, there is an advocate for them, and he is the propitiation for their sins? That this is an argument for men to forbeare sin, is such a Paradox, not only to the world, but even to professors themselves, that for ought I see, in matters of Religion, at this day, there is nothing so vilely calumniated, as the publishing of this free grace of God to men, in this way, as being the high way to break out into all manner of sinfulnes whatsoever. This, say men, is that which lets go the reins into the neck of Libertisme; this is that which makes men take liberty without controule, freely to commit any sin in the world. Who ever is of this mind, I must tell him, before I go on, he doth directly crosse the wisdome of God, and directly give the lie to the Apostle here, that expresseth with much infallibility to the world, how little hurt the knowledge of the pardon of sin can do

do to persons in Jesus Christ, in that he presseth it as an argument to prevail from sin. I shall beseech you, beloved, not to have any regard to any words I shall say of myself to you, but as I shal speak the full mind of the Holy Ghost; And I shall give you one point first in generall, which is the main scope of the Apostle here, and afterwards handle the severall branches of it particularly.

First, I say, take the generall scope of the Apostle here, and then, as the Scripture will evince the truth, so for the truths sake receive that which shall be delivered, though for the present it may seem otherwise then ordinary.

The point that ariseth out of the words is this; observe how naturally it ariseth out of the words:

For a person, who hath fellowship with the Father and the Sonne, one of the little children, which the Apostle speaks of here; for such a person to know before hand, before he doth commit sin, that there is an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for sin; to know this, I say, is so far from being a spur to provoke him to the commission of sin, that it is one of the strongest arguments, and the best motives to prevail with such persons to refrain from the commission of sin.

First, see how naturally it lieth in the Text; that

that you may see the Doctrine is no fancy, not opinion of men, but the cleer truth. It appears plainly, that the Apostles business here, is to take men off from sinning, & that appears in the beginning of the text: *These things I write unto you, that you sin not.* And then immediately follows these words, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father.* To what purpose doth he bring in these words, if he doth not bring them in as a motive to prevail with them to the thing hee perswades them unto. Nay, he tels us plainly, he doth write these words on purpose to them, that they do not sin. What was it that he wrote to them before? First, I say, he writes this, that *the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin*; and then again, *If we confesse our sins, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins.* And now saith he, *These things I write unto you, that you sin not*; *If any man sin, wee have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* Here, saith the Apostle, *these things I write unto you, that you sin not.* Suppose one man should come unto another, and tell him, there is such a friend of yours will do such and such things for you, for he hath told me he intends such good things to you, and I tell you these things, that you may comply with this man, that will do all this for you. Beloved, is not here compliance to this man provoked by the graciousnesse and kind-

nesse

neſſe revealed from ſuch a man, that he will ſhew? Yea, this mercy and favour revealed, is the ſpur to cauſe him to comply. So the Apoſtle ſaith here: *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous. Theſe things I write unto you, that you ſin not.* It is plain therefore, that the knowing what ſhall become of our ſins; namely, that they ſhall do us no hurt; the knowing of this before hand, is not the opening a ſluice or a flood-gate to provoke to ſinfulneſſe, but a bridle to reſtrain men from ſin: For you ſhall finde by conſulting with the Scripture, that the Holy Ghoſt is not rare, but very plentifull in opening of this very truth, that the free Grace of God, and the ſecurity of a believer from ſin, is therefore made manifeſt, that believers might not ſin.

Look in the third Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, ſee how fully the Apoſtle *Paul* manifeſts this very buſineſs we have now in hand. In the 23. & 24. verſes of that Chapter, he beginneth to relate, (after he had ſhewed the deſperate condition of man by nature, in reſpect of what he himſelf could do) he begins to relate the admirable free Grace of God to men, even while they are enemies, while they can do nothing that is good; therein eſtabliſhing of free Grace; and then he comes to ſhew, that this revelation of grace, thus, is a way to put them upon

upon more obedience, than if it ſhould be hidden from them. Obſerve the words: *But now the righteouſneſs of God*, ſaith he, in the 21. ver. *without the Law is manifeſted, being witneſſed by the Law & the Prophets, even the righteouſnes of God, which is by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt, unto all, and upon all that do believe: for there is no difference, for all have ſinned, and have come ſhort of the glory of God, being juſtified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt, whom God hath ſet forth to be the propitiation through faith in his bloud, to declare his righteouſnes for the remiſſion of ſins.* Mark how ſweetly & excellently he preacheth the free grace of God, concluding all under ſin; and in a deſperate condition in reſpect of ſin, and then he brings in the righteouſnes of Chriſt; namely, free juſtification by him that is the propitiation for our ſins. But now, whats the fruit of all this? The Apoſtle in his time found, that the preaching of this free grace unto men as they are ſinners, raiſed this very objection that is on foot to this day, & I believe, will be to the end of the world; and therefore mark the laſt ver. of that Chapter, after he had ended this great diſcourſe, and laid down his foundation & ground, that a man is *juſtified by faith, without the works of the Law*; The object. that comes in is this: *Do we make void the Law through faith? God forbid, nay, rather we eſtabliſhit.*

Mark

Marke the expreſſion, few will ſubſcribe to this ſentence which the Apoſtle delivers: That to preach to men (though the deſperateſt ſinners under heaven) there may be as free juſtification as for the righteouſeſt and holieſt man in the world, though by the deeds of the Law there be no juſtification, though there be nothing but condemnation by the Law pronounced againſt him; yet notwithſtanding there is juſtification for ſuch men, and that this is the means to reſtrain from ſin. Why, ſay ſome, this gives liberty to all uncleanneſſe, for a man to know, that notwithſtanding his wicked eſtate, he ſhall be juſtified freely, and he ſhall be ſaved, it is impoſſible he ſhould miſcarry. Who will not take liberty to ſin, when he knows, that though he doth ſin, though his ſins be never ſo great, all his ſins ſhall be done away, he ſhall not receive any hurt at all by them, though he doth commit them? is not this to make void the Law, you will ſay? Mark the Apoſtles anſwer, *God forbid; nay, rather we eſtabliſh the Law*. that is, the preaching of this doctrine to you that are Believers, little children, that have fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, will not make void the Law: You cannot take liberty from this free Grace revealed. The preaching and publiſhing of this free Grace of God, doth more effectually win believers to obedience and for-

forbearance of sin, then any other course in the world that can be taken. This saith the Apostle is a doctrine that doth establish the Law, and not make it void, that is, it doth establish men in obedience to the will of God, and bring them neerer in conformity to the Law, and doth not set men loose to the breaking, and violating, & frustrating of the Law, and to prophanels.

And so the same Apostle, in the self-same Epistle, having in the 4. and 5 Chapters gone on in an unparalleled way, in the revelation of the admirable Grace of God, speaking of *Abraham*, that he was justified, being yet uncircumcised, to shew that we are justified when we are in the worst of sinfulnesse; and sweetly speaking in the 5. Chapter, *when yet we had no strength Christ died for us*; and *while we were yet sinners Christ died for us*; and *when wee were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Sonne:* and in the latter end of the 5. Chapter, having shewed the free gift and Grace of God to us, being considered as lost persons in *Adam*, at the beginning of the 6. Chapter, at ver. 1. the Apostle meets with the same objection in substance, and answers it more fully then he did before: The objection is this; *Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid*, saith he, *How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* The summe and substance of the objection

jection is this: Is there so much Grace, that where sin hath abounded, Grace aboundeth much more? then it seems, that the more sin a man doth commit the more will the glory of the Grace of God appear in the pardoning of these sins, and so I shall glorifie God best, when I commit sin most, will some say. So that the preaching of the abundance of grace where sin hath abounded, seems to let men loose to the commission of sin as much as possibly. The Apostle answers this with, *God forbid:* as if he had said, God will never suffer any Believer, though never so weak, through any such truth reveal'd, to break out into any sin, because wher sin hath abounded grace hath abounded much more, God will never have them to make any such abominable inference from such truths: And he also gives the reason why they cannot make such use of the grace of God. *How shall we that are dead unto sin, live anylonger therein?* to the Apostle, the inference of the objectors from this argument, seems so absurd, that he doth appeal to the adversaries themselves, how such an inference as this can follow such a Proposition. He doth not say positively, that they cannot live in sin that are dead to it, but he puts the question to them how it can be? And whereas some may answer; yea, they may easily do it. No, saith the Apostle, they that are partakers of this Grace,

Grace, are dead unto sin, and how can they live in it, when they are dead to it? The glorious power of this Grace revealed, strikes sinne dead in men, or rather strikes men dead to sin. *Sinne shall not have dominion over you*, saith the Apostle, *for you are not under the Law, but under Grace.* And as you shall heare by and by, the Apostle makes the very Grace of God to have that power in it, as to breake the neck of sin in the Believer. This is the most certaine truth of the Text, and springs directly from it. There is a death unto sin, where there is a revelation, effectually of the Grace of God to persons to whom it doth belong. It brings a dart with it to slay sin. *The law of the Spirit of life that is in Christ, hath freed me from the law of sin, and death; and what the law could not doe, in that it was weake through the flesh, God sent forth his Son in the similitude of sinfull flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh*: so that although to reason and sense, the preaching of the free Grace of God to men, and to publish what the Lord hath done for them for his own sake, and that before-hand, may seem to be a doctrine that gives liberty to sin, and so to be a licentious doctrine; yet it seems to the Apostle, that there is nothing that doth more establish a restraint from sin, then the manifestation hereof.

In the 11. to the *Romans*, towards the latter

end of the Chapter, the Apoſtle tells us, that God hath concluded *all men under ſinne that hee might ſhew mercy upon all*: and therefore he falls out into admiration, *O the depth of the riches both of the Wiſdome and Knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgements, and his wayes aſt finding out!* Now, what follows? Having revealed this unſearchable Grace, ſee how hee begins in the 12. Chapter and 1. verſe: *I beſeech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your reaſonable ſervice. And be not conformed to this world; but bee transformed by the renewing of your mindes*, that is, I beſeech you by the mercies of God, that you refraine from ſinne. What mercy doth he meane? Even the mercies of God concerning the freeneſſe of his Grace, manifeſted before in all the 11. Chapter. Now, if the Apoſtle had beene of ſome mens mindes, that the preaching of the free Grace of God were a dangerous doctrine to ſet men looſe to ſin, he would never have uſed the mercies of God as an argument to prevail with men to refrain from ſin. Hee would not have publiſhed that which ſhould have been of ſuch dangerous conſequence, but he would rather have been ſilent, ſo far would hee have been from revealing of it as an argument to the contrary, were the revelation of it the way to bring

bring men to looſeneſſe and licentiouſneſſe, it had been the wiſdome of *Paul*, and the other Apoſtles, to have concealed it, which certainly he would have done, had it been ſo. But the Apoſtle was not of that judgement; and therfore, in 1 *Corinth.* chap. 6. and towards the latter end, he draws his argument after the ſame manner: *You are not your owne, you are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your bodies, and ſpirits, for they are Gods.* Obſerve here, that the injunction which the Apoſtle gives the *Corinthians*, is, that they ſhould glorifie God in their bodies and ſpirits; and what is the argument by which he would perſwade them to it? *You are bought with a price*: But, will ſome ſay, it ſeems I am bought, and the price is laid downe for me now, I am ſure enough, I am ſafe, the gates of hell cannot prevail againſt me, I may live as I liſt, for no danger will follow now, I may take liberty to ſin. Now, if the Apoſtle had known that this conſequence would juſtly have followed upon the preaching of this Grace, he had dealt very diſcourteouſly with the people of God, and abſurdly by inforcing a concluſion from a ground contrary to it, by revealing ſuch a doctrine as this is. Therefore ſurely the Apoſtle would never have uſed this expreſſion of being *bought with a price*, if he had knowne that this would

follow : but contrariwiſe, he knew that there is no way in the world, will ſo much prevaile with Gods people to leave their ſins, as by telling them before hand, that their ſins are forgiven them, and that they are bought with a price.

In 2 *Titus*, from the beginning to the 12. *v.* you ſhall finde how the Apoſtle urgeth *Titus*, that hee preſſe a holy converſation anſwerable to old men and old women, as alſo to young women, and young men; and alſo a converſation ſuitable to ſervants: and eſpecially he writes concerning them, that they ſhould not purloin from their maſters, but ſhew all faithfulneſſe. But what is the argument now, by which the Apoſtle urgeth all theſe things upon theſe men? See in the 12. and 13. verſes, and you ſhall finde, that the argument is the ſame we have now in hand : *For the Grace of God*, ſaith he, *that brings ſalvation hath appeared, teaching us to deny all ungodlineſſe and worldly luſts, and that we ſhould live righteouſly, ſoberly, and godly in this preſent world.* As much as to ſay, The Lord hath made known, and revealed his ſalvation to you, and you ſee it before you, Salvation is brought unto you; and not your well-doing, but the Grace of God is that which brings this ſalvation to you. Then may I doe what I liſt, will ſome ſay : No, ſaith the Apoſtle, This Grace of God

God that brings ſalvation, brings this too; It teacheth us to deny all ungodlineſſe and worldly luſts; and that we ſhould live godlily; ſoberly, and righteouſly in this preſent world. I ſay, it is blaſphemy againſt the truth of the Holy Ghoſt in theſe ſeverall paſſages of Scripture, to ſay, or to maintaine, that this is a neceſſary inference from the revelation of the free Grace of God to men before-hand, that thereby men will breake out into ſin and uncleanneſſe, and give up themſelves thereto, and that this is the way to give up the reines into the neck of vice and licentiouſneſſe.

I will give you but one paſſage more, although I confeſſe, I have gone further in the cleering of this buſineſſe by Scripture, then I intended: becauſe. I know it ſticks ſo in the hearts of oppoſers and quarrellers, and cavillers that are ready to ſpit fire into the faces of thoſe perſons that are aſſertors and maintainers of the free grace of God, and the publiſhers thereof to the people of God. I will give, I ſay, but one place more in confirmation hereof; namely, that which the Apoſtle delivers in 1 *John* 3. 9. the words are theſe, *He that is borne of God ſinneth not* (ſaith hee) *becauſe the ſeede of God abides in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe hee is borne of God. Hee that is borne of God*; What is that? It is no more but this, he that is received into Grace by

Chriſt, becomes one with Chriſt in reſpect of the ſpirituall union between Chriſt and ſuch a perſon. To bee borne of God, and to be a new creature, is all one. To be new creatures, is to be ſuch as wee were not before. More fully, a new creature is a perſon that is tranſlated from himſelfe into Chriſt, and he ſtands before God as Chriſt himſelf, and not as he is in, or of himſelfe. Now, ſuch a perſon, ſaith the Apoſtle, *ſinnes not; becauſe the ſeede of God abides in him; nay, he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God.* There may bee ſome difficulty in the expreſſion, but you muſt know, the intention of the Apoſtle *John* here, is to take off the obiection againſt the Doctrine of the free Grace of God, that it is a licencious Doctrine, to take off, I ſay, the reproach that is unjuſtly caſt upon it. And ſo the meaning of the Apoſtle *John* is this, *Hee that is borne of God ſinnes not*, that is, hee cannot take ſuch liberty to ſinne, he cannot make ſuch licentious uſes of the Grace of God, as to walk in ſinfull courſes, though his ſins ſhall not hurt him. I ſay, this licentious living in ſin, is the thing the Apoſtle ſpeakes of here: *Hee that is borne of God ſinnes not.* And the reaſon is, *becauſe the ſeed of God abides in him*, that is, there is an over-ruling power planted in him, to overmatch the propenſity of the fleſh that remains ſtill in Beleevers, that it ſhould not have that liberty

liberty and power that naturally it would have, by vertue of ſuch a Principle implanted; Not that the Apoſtle ſpeakes abſolutely of ſin, that a childe of God ſhall ſinne no more; for that were to make the Apoſtle *John* himſelfe the lier, and that by his owne words; and to ſpeak againſt himſelfe: For he ſaith in another place; *Hee that ſaith hee hath no ſin, deceives himſelfe, and is a lier*: And King *Solomon* alſo, who ſaith, that *there is not a juſt man upon earth that doeth good, and ſinneth not*, Eccleſ. 7. 20. Therefore by ſinne in this place, he muſt needs mean a licentious liberty taken unto ſin.

Beloved, I know there are many objections raiſed againſt this truth; I ſhall briefly run through ſome of them to you, and if it be poſſible, clear this truth unto you at this time, and vindicate the Goſpell from thoſe abominable untruths caſt upon it; and that I will do the rather, becauſe thouſands in the world turne away from the Grace of God, and dare not venture themſelves upon it: Becauſe they fear, if they ſhould adventure themſelves upon theſe principles of free Grace, they ſhould preſently take liberty to ſin, and ſo fall away and apoſtatize: Oh! how many have miſcarried and refuſed their owne mercies, and have not received the Goſpell to this day upon ſuch conceits, that the receiving of it ſhould make them

break out into ungodlineſſe. I know here are many here preſent, cannot but witneſſe, they are affraid to cloſe with free Grace, though never ſo fully proved and manifeſted in Scripture upon this conſideration, that it will make them live looſely.

Object. 1. Firſt, ſome will object and ſay, we know many Beleevers, that do take liberty to themſelves, when once they have beene acquainted with ſuch free Grace that hath beene preached.

Anſw. For anſwer to this: Firſt, I ſay, that if Beleevers from this Grace publiſhed, doe take liberty, they take but what God giveth them. The end of Chriſts coming, and preaching the free grace of God to men, is this very thing, that in it the Lord might proclaime liberty to the captives, which are Chriſts owne people. Chriſt came of purpoſe, as you ſhall finde in *Heb.* 2. 15. *to deliver thoſe, who through feare of death, are ſubject to bondage all their lives long.* And therefore, ſaith Chriſt, *If the Son ſhall make you free, you ſhall bee free indeed*, that is, if the Son give you Liberty, then you ſhall have liberty indeed. So that if Believers do take this liberty upon this ground, they take but that which is their owne, purchaſed unto them by the blood of Chriſt, and given unto them freely by God their Father.

Object. 2.

Object. 2 But ſome will ſay, It is a true Chriſtian liberty that Chriſt allows, and this indeed is a liberty that Chriſt gives men to be delivered from the captivity and bondage of ſin, which they were under before: But many that profeſſe this doctrine, are knowne to be more ſlack in the performance of duties, and to grow more and more cold in their zeale, and careleſſe in the practice of Religion, and are more regardleſſe of ſin; and in a word, take more liberty to ſinne ſince ſuch Grace hath been revealed.

Answ. For anſwer to this, Beloved, firſt you are not to expect perfection of works from Believers in this life, and that they ſhould be free from all manner of ſin. I know none of thoſe that have the moſt indignation againſt this doctrine of the free grace of God to men, but will yeeld, that they themſelves are not without failings, they ought not therefore to aggravate the weakneſſe of their brethren, much leſſe ought the truth of God to bee charged with the failings of men. But ſuppoſe ſome do make evill uſes of the free Grace of God ſometimes, & are therby encouraged to be more bold with ſin; as they are not to be upheld in it, nor allowed, ſo ought not their fault to be laid upon the free Grace of God, which effectually teacheth us the contrary: For, though Beleevers

in

in infirmity may happen, at ſome times or other, to be overcome with ſtrength of paſſion and corruption, to fall into ſin, upon conſideration that the free Grace of God will ſave them; yet ſhall we therefore conceal this Grace of God, becauſe men take that liberty which it doth not give? I ſay, beloved, if this ſhould be a ſtanding rule, God ſhould never have revealed the Goſpell to the ſons of men. I know no Beleever ſo perfect in a courſe of ſanctification and obedience, and abſtinence from ſin, but his corruption may occaſion him to take advantage, even from the Goſpell it ſelfe, to ſin. But certainly, I dare be bold to affirm, there is not any Believer, that is a true Beleever indeed, that doth maintain this Principle, that he may ſin without controule, becauſe the free Grace of God hath abounded. I dare ſay further, that it is a bold ſlander, and that no man is able to make it good from true evidence, that there is any that doth take conſtant and frequent liberty to break out into ſinfullneſſe, becauſe he knows what ſhall become of him, and that his ſins are done away by the blood of Chriſt, ſo that they ſhall do him no hurt. For the beliefe of this, doth certainly and effectually teach and produce an hatred of ſin, and a love of holineſſe; So that certainly, this is more then can bee proved againſt any true Beleever, that

that he should approve himself in any sin upon this ground. If indeed Beleevers were in their owne keeping, then what sinne might they not fall into? But they doe not stand upon their own legs, they do not go in their own strength, they do not walk by their own principles; for, saith the Apostle, *You are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. And againe, saith the Apostle *Paul*, *The life that I now live, is by the faith of the Son of God that loved me, and gave himself for me, and I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.* It is not a Believer now that lives, but it is Christ that lives in him, and he is the predominant principle whereby his actions are swayed: And as the Beleever is carried along according to the principles of Christ he cannot fall into sin. It is true indeed, Christ for reasons best knowne to him, may let loose the reins and the cords wherewith hee holds a Beleever for a while, and then he may fall into sin; but this comes to passe, because the Grace of God is hid, and not because it is manifested unto him, and beleeved by him: and at length the power of Christ shall pul them in againe, and restrain them, even by those cords of love, whereby they were first drawn unto him. And the Beleever hath the ingagement of Christ himself, that hee will never, faile him, nor forsake him; and hee hath promised, that his strength

ſtrength ſhall be made perfect in weakneſſe, and his grace ſhall be ſufficient for him. And that becauſe they are not *under the Law, but under Grace, therefore ſinne ſhall not have dominion over them,* as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, *Rom.* 6.14. So that except Chriſt will give up one of his own members to make it his conſtant practice to abuſe and turne the Grace of God to ſin, he ſhall not do it But Chriſt hath undertaken that ſin ſhall not have dominion over that perſon, that is a member of his.

Object. 3. But ſome will ſay, There are many that doe admire and adore the Doctrine of the free Grace of God, that yet are notoriouſly known to live in all manner of lewdneſſe and licentiouſneſſe, and that upon this ground, becauſe their ſins are laid upon Chriſt; and they ſay, we may live in ſin, and do what we liſt, and what is their argument? Oh, ſay they! our ſins are laid upon Chriſt, and Chriſt died for them.

Anſw. For anſwer to this, I profeſſe, I never heard from any perſon of credit, that there are any ſuch monſters as theſe are, that dare preſume to make it their practice to be drunk, and to break the Sabbath, and to curſe, and to ſwear, and to live in uncleanneſſe, and all manner of vileneſſe and abomination, becauſe all their ſins are laid upon Chriſt, that ſay, they are Beleevers, and they ſhall doe well enough.

There

There are many that are taxed for ſuch; but for mine owne part, I cannot ſay any thing to the truth of this charge, by mine owne experience, of any man in the world: But it may bee there are ſuch monſters as theſe are, in the world: And the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaid there were ſuch in his time, that becauſe the Grace of God did abound, therefore would make ſinne to abound, and turne the Grace of God into wantonneſſe; and therefore it is probable there are ſuch now. And if there be any ſuch, let me deal plainly with them, for my part, I muſt account them the greateſt monſters upon the face of the earth, the greateſt enemies to the Church that ever were; and I ſay of ſuch diſhonourers of the Church, and diſturbers of the conſciences of Gods people, that they are carnall, ſenſuall, and devilliſh. They are the greateſt enemies to the free Grace of God, and the greateſt ſubverters of the power and purity of the Goſpel, and the greateſt hinderers of the courſe of it, that are under heaven: And I dare be bold to ſay, open Drunkards and Harlots, and Murtherers, that profeſſe not the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, come infinitly ſhort of thoſe perſons in abomination. No perſons in the world, do ſo wound the ſides of Chriſt, as he that doth profeſſe the Goſpel, and yet live wickedly. And if there be any ſuch here, let me tell them, their faith

faith is no better then the faith of devils; for they believe and tremble, and that Christ will have a heavier reckoning and account for such when they come to judgment, then for any persons under heaven besides. How many thousands have forsaken their own mercy, and despised the free Grace of God, accounting it a licentious doctrine, and a doctrine giving liberty to sin, and all because of the occasion that such persons as these do give by their vile conversation? Well, beloved, admit that the free Grace of God hath been thus abused by such wretches, look over the whole Scripture, hath not the whole Scripture, both Law and Gospel, been abused, as well as this particular Grace? Is not Christ set up and appointed for the rising and falling of many in Israel? Is not he appointed as well to be a stumbling stone for the falling of many, as to be a corner stone for the rising of many? Is not Christ set up as a Rocke for some to build upon, but to dash others in pieces? Is not he set up for a stone of offence to grinde many to powder, as well as to be a foundation stone to others? Assure your selves, the Gospel of Christ, as it shall make Believers far more holy then they can bee that receive not the Gospel: So there are some that shall grow far more filthy, and take occasion from the Gospel and Grace of God to this filthinesse.

thineſſe But in the mean time, ſhall the children want their bread, becauſe Dogs catch at it? Will not you give your child a bit of food all the day, and all the week, becauſe when you give it them the Dogs ſnatch at it, and it may be pull ſome of it out of their hands? Shall the children ſtarve for want of bread, becauſe Dogs abuſe it? Nay, beloved, the children muſt not want their bread, becauſe Dogs abuſe it; neither muſt we make that bitter and ſowre which God hath made ſweet: Becauſe wicked men abuſe the Goſpel and free Grace of God, ſhall the people of God be deprived of that which God hath appointed and provided for them? Let me aske this queſtion of you: Did not the Lord himſelf, from everlaſting, as cleerly ſee and know, even long before he did reveal it, how his free Grace ſhould be abuſed, when it ſhould bee preached, as wee our ſelves ſee it abuſed? If it be ſuch a dangerous and pernicious thing to preach the free Grace of God, why did hee give ſuch a large commiſſion, and ſuch a ſtrait charge to his Apoſtles and Miniſters to preach it to every creature? If the publication of it be ſo dangerous, who muſt be blamed for it? muſt not God himſelfe that hath commanded us to preach it? Beloved, if the Miniſters of the Goſpel preach the minde of Chriſt unto his people, ſhall they be traduced and oppoſed for

it

it? Do ye not through us wound the ſides of Chriſt, and God himſelf? Is not this to charge him that is wiſdome it ſelf with folly? For if Miniſters do declare this doctrine, it is no more then that which God hath before revealed unto them, and given them commiſſion for. But if Miniſters out of a carnall and needleſſe fear of liberty, inſtead of preaching the mind of God, ſhall preach themſelves; (let it be never ſo ſpecious and well liked of by men) they ſhall bee judged of God as coming in their own names, as being not ſent by him.

Object. But you will ſay, it may be done with caution and limitation.

Anſw. I anſwer, let us not be more wary and cautious then God would have us be, to put mixtures of mens doings to the obtaining of the Grace of God, while the Lord himſelf doth poure out his grace to men ſimply for his owne ſake, without conſideration of any thing in them. *The children being yet unborne*, ſpeaking of *Jacob* and *Eſau*, when yet they had done neither good nor evill, it was ſaid unto *Rebekah*, *The elder ſhall ſerve the younger*, as it is written, *Jacob have I loved, and Eſau have I hated*; men will be a mincing of this truth, and they will tell you, if you will keep cloſe unto God, and if you refraine from ſin, eſpecially from groſſe ſin, God will love you, and then you may apply theſe

theſe and theſe promiſes to your ſelves; but God ſpeakes plainly and expreſly here, *Before they had done either good or evill*, Jacob *have I loved.* The Grace of God is paſſed over to men as they are ungodly, *while they are yet enemies and ſinners*; men being yet unborne, when there is nothing in them conſidered, but pollution in blood and menſtruouſneſſe, God caſts his loving kindneſſe, and eſtabliſhes it: before *Jacob* had done any thing, before he had any good intention in him, God loved him, and had appointed this Grace for him. This is the Grace of God revealed, and he hath revealed it, and exhibited it thus freely to men. Now, is this the Lord himſelfe that ſpeaks it? Hath the Lord given us commiſſion and charge to preach this Goſpel and Grace of his, and ſhall we be blamed and oppoſed, and ſcandalized for ſpeaking thoſe things that God hath commanded us to ſpeak, and hath put into our mouths, ſaying, we preach a doctrine of looſneſſe and licentiouſneſſe, and give men leave to do what they liſt? And yet all this is but grounded upon carnall fear, and needleſſe jealouſie of a licentious liberty.

Obj. 4. But ſome will ſay, the preaching of the terrors of the Law, and the wrath of God, and damnation, and hell fire unto men, is a ſafer way to take men off from ſinne, then to preach Grace and forgiveneſſe of ſins before

hand. It is better to lay the foundation first in the preaching of wrath and damnation.

Answ. For answer to this, I say, if we preach wrath and damnation, wee must either make them beleeve they lie under that wrath, and that wrath shall come upon them, or we must make them believe, that though there be wrath, yet it shall not fall upon them. Now, if we tell them of wrath and damnation, and the terrors of the Law, and say they are secure from them, they belong not to them, to what purpose doe wee tell them of wrath, wee had as good hold our tongues and say nothing: If wee should terrifie them, and make them to beleeve, being Beleevers, for of those I speake, if they commit these and these sins, they shall be damned, and so come under the wrath of God; and except they performe such and such duties, except they walke thus and thus holily, and doe these and these good workes, they shall come under the wrath of God, or at least, God will be angry with them; what do we in this, but abuse the Scriptures? we undoe all that Christ that done, we injure and wrong the Believers themselves, we tell God that he lies to his face: For, if we tell Believers, that except they doe these and these good workes, they shall come under the wrath of God; what is this, but to tell God that he lies, and to bring the faithfull under

der a covenant of Works? Look into the 54. of *Iſaiah*, and the 9. verſe, and you ſhall ſee how it is a belying of God, to ſay, that Believers may come under wrath and damnation, except they doe thus and thus; the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks there of the time when the ſeed of *Jacob* ſhall inherit the *Gentiles*, that is, the time of the Goſpel. In the beginning, the Lord tells us of an everlaſting kindneſſe, that ſhould never depart, nor be made void, and he confirms it thus: *This is as the water of* Noah *unto mee, ſaith the Lord, for as I have ſworne that the waters of* Noah *ſhall never goe over the earth againe, ſo have I ſworne, that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee: The mountaines ſhall depart, and the hills ſhall bee removed, but my loving kindneſſe ſhall not depart from thee; neither ſhall the covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord.* Obſerve it well; hath God made ſuch an oath concerning theſe very times ſo firme, and ſo ſtable, that the earth ſhall be drowned againe with water, before it ſhall be broken; *That hee will not be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them any more*; and ſhall wee ſay to the people of God, ſhall we tell Believers, if they ſinne, they ſhall come under Gods wrath, and except they do ſuch and ſuch good works, God will be angry with them, and that after he hath ſo ſworn and ingaged himſelf, that he will not be wroth

with his people any more? Is not this to make God a lier? Againe wee doe not only ſo much as lies in us, make God a lier, but we offer an inſufferable affront unto Jeſus Chriſt, and ſtrike at the very heart of the whole office of Chriſts Mediatorſhip. If wee ſay that God is wroth with Beleevers for whom Chriſt died; for what end did Chriſt ſuffer death? I ſay, if this principle bee a truth, that God will bee wroth with his people, and angry with them, then Chriſt died in vaine: For God could have been but wroth, hee could have been but angry with his people, if Chriſt had never died And to bring the people of God under wrath and vengeance againe for their ſins, is to take away all the vertue of the death of Chriſt, and to make it of none effect: And how will this principle ſtand with that in the 53. of *Iſaiah*, where it is ſaid, that he beheld the travell of his ſoul, and was ſatisfied? Was God ſatisfied with ſufferings of Chriſt, having the ſinnes of men laid upon him, and yet is God wroth and angry with Beleevers for thoſe very ſins again, which before hee acknowledged ſatisfaction for? If ſo be a man be indebted unto another, and the creditor be willing to take a ſurety for the debt, and this ſurety comes in and payes this debt for the man hee was bound for, and hee thereupon gives a generall diſcharge under hand

hand and ſeal, ſhal he yet by & by after take the debter by the throat, and clap him up in Gaol, when the ſurety hath anſwered for the debt before, and after hee hath delivered under hand and ſeal that he was ſatisfied, and that his book was croſt? Who but muſt ſay it is injuſtice in the higheſt degree? What juſtice, what equity is in this? Beloved, Chriſt became our ſurety, God accepted of him for our debt, he clapt up Chriſt in Gaol, as I may ſo ſay, for the debt: God tooke every farthing of Chriſt that hee could demand of us; he is now reconciled unto us, he will not now impute our ſins to us, he hath acknowledged ſatisfaction, it is upon record; And now ſhall he come upon them again with freſh wrath, for whom Chriſt hath done all this? Shall hee charge the debt upon them againe? He hath forgotten the death of Chriſt, it ſeems, if this be true. Therefore know thus much, that it is againſt the death of Chriſt; it is a making of it of none effect; it makes the coming of Chriſt to be in vaine, to ſay that the wrath of God will breake out upon Beleevers, if they commit ſuch and ſuch ſinnes. And for this that I have ſaid, If any man can produce one Scripture againſt it; if any man can ſhew in all the Booke of God, that it is any otherwiſe then I have delivered, for my part, I ſhall be of another minde, and willingly recant my

opinion. But I ſee the Scripture runs wholly in this ſtrain, and is ſo full in nothing as in this, that God hath generally diſcharged the ſins of Beleevers. Oh then, take heed of falling into that error of the *Papiſts*, that ſay, that God hath taken away the ſinne, but not the wrath of God due to ſinne; that he hath forgiven our ſins, but not the puniſhment of ſin: But I beſeech you conſider, that as our ſinnes were then upon Chriſt, he was ſo bruiſed for our iniquity, that by his ſtripes we are healed, and the chaſtiſement of our peace was ſo upon him, that he being chaſtiſed for our ſins, there is nothing elſe but peace belongs to us: And the chaſtiſement of our peace was ſo upon him, that he beheld the travell of his ſoule, and was ſatisfied. Chriſt was ſo chaſtiſed, as I have often ſaid, with the rod of Gods wrath, that it was quite worne out, and wholly ſpent it ſelfe upon him. This is apparent in the very tenor of the new Covenant it ſelf: It runs altogether upon free Gift and Grace. God takes upon himſelf to do all that ſhall be in Believers, asking and requiring nothing at all of us. It is true, he ſaith there ſhall be the new heart, and a new ſpirit, and that there ſhall bee a new Law written in the inward parts: But hee requires it not of the Believer, but hee himſelfe hath undertaken to doe all, and beſtow upon the

the Beleever. *A new heart will I give thee, and a new ſpirit will I put into thee; and I will take away thy ſtony heart, and I will give thee a heart of fleſh.* Hee doth not ſay, you muſt get you new hearts, and new ſpirits, and you muſt get your ſtony hearts taken away; and you muſt get you hearts of fleſh. But I will take the worke in hand, and I will ſee all done my ſelf. All runs freely upon Gods undertaking for his people. Seeing therefore God doth all things freely of his own accord in us, then, beloved, ſee how the Grace of God is abuſed by thoſe that would make men beleeve, that the Grace of God depends upon mens doings and performances, upon actions in the creature, and tell men, if they doe it not, the wrath of God will follow thereupon. This likewiſe batters down to the ground that way of urging men to holineſſe, which ſome men hold forth; that if men doe not theſe and theſe good workes, and leave theſe and theſe ſins, then they muſt come under the wrath of God, and that the wrath of God is but hidden all this while they doe theſe and theſe good works, but if they faile in any of theſe, then the wrath of God will breake out upon them; whereas they ought rather after the example of the Apoſtle, to excite them to theſe good workes, becauſe they are already freed from wrath. Certainly, this that I have

delivered proves this ſufficiently, that the appearing of the Grace of God doth teach men to doe the will of God effectually, the love of God conſtrains the faithfull, and not the feare of wrath.

But to conclude, do not miſtake me, in the mean while, I have no thoughts, as if wrath and vengeance were not to be preached, and made known even to Believers: yea, beloved, wrath and vengeance is to be made known to them, and that as the deſerts of ſin, and as the means to keep men from ſin.

Obj. But now, ſome may ſay, this ſeems to be againſt all that you have ſaid before, this ſeems to overthrow all that you have delivered.

Anſw. Obſerve me well, do not miſtake me, You muſt know, that wrath and vengeance muſt be revealed to Believers, and it muſt bee known to the end to reſtraine them from ſin, but not in that way men doe ordinarily think; I mean thus: Wrath and vengeance is not to be revealed, as if Believers were to fear them, or as if Believers ſhould come under them; but wrath and vengeance is to be revealed, as Believers are ſecured and freed from them, that ſo they ſhould feare to commit and fall into ſin, not for feare of coming under wrath, but out of love, becauſe God hath beene ſo gracious to them, as to deliver them from the weight of ſo heavie

heavie wrath and diſpleaſure, that otherwiſe muſt of neceſſity have fallen upon them, and ſo their walking with God in a holy converſation, is a fruit of the mercy already ſhewne, and doth not goe before, as a thing by which the mercy ſhould be obtained and procured. They ſerve God, becauſe they are delivered from wrath, and not becauſe they might receive deliverance from under wrath. It proceeded from joy, in conſideration of wrath already paſt, and not from feare of wrath to come; ſo that the wrath of God is preached unto them, not that they are to come under it, or that they are in that way to fear it; but that they may ſee what they are delivered from, that they may ſee what they did, and ſhould, and others muſt lie under; that they may ſee Gods love unto them therein, that this may draw them to obedience, and that this might reſtraine them from ſin. And now they ſay, becauſe I have been delivered from ſo great a wrath, therefore will I ſing and rejoyce, and I will walke before the Lord in the Land of the living, and I will triumph in the Lord my deliverer, leading a life anſwerable to the love of God, beſtowing ſuch a deliverance upon me; and ſo by this preaching of the wrath of God, as being freed from it; the more one ſeeth what he is freed from; the more he ſeeth what Chriſt hath done in bearing

bearing that wrath for him: and consequently, the more hee is stirred up to walke before God in more cheerfull and comfortable obedience, and the more thankfull hee will bee. And the more hee seeth what God hath done for him, the more obedience hee seeth hee oweth unto God.

And now, if any persons here present, have an evill opinion of the Grace of God as a thing of dangerous consequence as a licentious doctrine and that it is a meanes to make men take liberty to sin; let them learn from that which hath been said, to mende their mindes, and to correct their judgements, knowing that the Holy Ghost is of another minde: that the revealing of the Grace of God, is the best way in the world to take men off from sinne; so farre is it from letting loose the reines for persons to break out into all manner of sinfulnesse.

SERMON

SERMON. IV.

1 John 2. verſ. 1,2.

My little children, theſe things I write unto you, that you ſinne not: And if any man ſinne, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſinnes, and not for our ſinnes only, but for the ſinnes of the whole world.

Have elſewhere made an entrance, in reſpect of ſome generalls theſe words afford; time being precious, we ſhall be as thriving of it as poſſible may be; only a few words, ſo far as may ſerve to bring us where we were, and then we ſhall bring you on (through Gods aſſiſtance) through the particulars this Text holds forth unto us.

The main ſcope of the Apoſtle in this place, is to endeavour to take the people of God off from running into ſin. But, firſt, he uſeth an argument

gument to prevail with them which ſeems abſurd unto the world, and doubtleſſe goes for little leſſe then fooliſhneſſe among men, if not worſe then fooliſhneſſe: *I write to you that you ſin not.* Well, but how will he prevail with them? *If any man ſinne we have an Advocate with the Father, and he is the propitiation for our ſinnes*: As much as to ſay, this is the beſt way to prevail with you, that you ſinne not, to know before hand, that if you do ſinne, you have an Advocate with the Father that will take away your faults, and ſave you harmleſſe. Indeed, it is accounted abſurd; but this is the common ſtrain of the Goſpell, to make this the beſt argument that can be imagined, to prevaile over people from the committing of ſin, to let them know how gracious God is unto them, even to the forgiving of their ſins they ſhall commit; and that which wee noted as the main body of the Diſcourſe was this: For ſuch perſons, who have fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, to know before hand that they have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, who is the propitiation for their ſins, I ſay, to know this before hand, before they do commit ſin, is ſo far from being the opening of the flood-gates to ſinne, that it is a ſhutting down thereof, to ſtop the courſe of ſinfulneſſe. The Holy Ghoſt is very plentifull in this very way

of

of arguing to prevail with people not to ſinne, ſhewing clearly thereby, that the proclaiming of the free grace of God to men in the pardon of their ſins, and letting them know it before they doe ſin, doth not deſtroy obedience to the Law of God, but doth eſtabliſh it better than any other arguments can doe You may ſee it clearly in the 3. to the *Romans* 23. & 24. verſes compared with verſ 31. *For all have ſinned, and have come ſhort of the glory of God, being juſtified freely by his Grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt, whom God hath ſet forth to bee the propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſſe for the remiſſion of their ſinnes that are paſt through the forbearance of God.* In theſe verſes, the Apoſtle preacheth free Grace, in the abſolute freeneſſe of it, even to perſons that are utterly undon, and know not what to doe, and in the laſt verſe of that Chapter, the Apoſtle brings in an objection: *Doe wee make void the Law through faith? God forbid, we rather eſtabliſh the Law.* The Apoſtle making his concluſion, we are juſtified by faith without the deeds of the Law; this, ſaith he, doth eſtabliſh the Law, and doth not make it void. To know, that from all the ſins we doe commit, we are freely juſtified by his Grace; this doth eſtabliſh obedience, and doth not make void the Law: So in the 6th Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle to the

Romans

Romans, the 1. and 2. verſes, the Apoſtle having gone on to declare the exceeding riches of the Grace of God in the 4. & 5. Chapters, he makes the ſame objection in ſubſtance that he did before: *Shall wee continue in ſinne that Grace may abound? God forbid; how ſhall wee that are dead unto ſinne, live any longer therein?* Wherein hee ſhews plainly, that though ſome may collect that this is a way to make men continue in ſin, to preach the exceeding riches of the Grace of God; yet he ſaith, there can be no ſuch concluſion drawne there-from by juſt inference: *How ſhall we that are dead unto ſinne, live any longer therein?* Wherein he puts it to the Objectors themſelves, whether they can make it out, how it is poſſible it ſhould bee ſo. Therefore the Apoſtle doth make uſe of it, as the ſtrength of his argument to prevaile with people: In the 12. to the *Romans*, *I beſeech you by the mercies of God, that you preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice.* You ſee hee makes uſe of mercy, and what mercy is it? In the latter part of Chap. 11. he ſeems to intimate what that mercy is: *O the depth and the exceeding riches, both of the Wiſdome and Knowledge of God!* Why wherein? It follows, in that *he hath concluded all under ſinne, that he might have mercy upon all.* I beſeech you by theſe mercies, (ſaith he) and all other mercies of free Grace, *preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable*

acceptable unto God, not conforming your selves to this world: as if hee had said, mercy is that which wil prevail with you most of al, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, and not conform your selves to the world, but I must go on to that we have yet to consider. I have spent some time in Objections and Answers, but wee cannot now dwell upon them. We are to consider now the specialties of the argument the Apostle useth here to prevail with people that they sin not.

Beloved, this very Text is the opening of the fountaine that is set open for sinne, and for uncleanes: it is a spring of strong water to revive a fainting & swooning spirit; it is the prop of a sinking & tottering soule, to keep it from sinking and perishing: In it the Lord Christ is revealed unto us, an All-sufficient succour to all his own, notwithstanding all their sins that ever they do commit. Herein we are to consider:

1. The matter of this argument.
2. The force and strength of it, in reference to the thing the Apostle would argue from hence.

First, concerning the matter of the argument it selfe that is contained in these words: *If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.*

The force of it lies in the reference of it to the

the thing the Apoſtle calls for, wherein we may conſider what prevalency this Poſition hath to keep from ſin; namely, for perſons to know, that when they doe ſin, they have an Advocate with the Father.

We will begin with the matter of the Argument firſt, and in this Propoſition there are two things obſervable.

Firſt, a Suppoſition.

Secondly, a Proviſion of indemnity againſt the miſchiefe of the thing ſuppoſed.

The Suppoſition laid downe, is in theſe words; *If any man ſin*: or, *If any man do ſin.*

The Proviſion of indemnity is in theſe words; *We have an Advocate with the Father*, &c.

In the ſuppoſition you may note,

Firſt, the thing ſuppoſed, and that is *Sin.*

Secondly, note the time which doth illuſtrate it; hee doth ſpeak of preſent and future ſins.

Note, I ſay, the time whereunto the Apoſtle doth refer the thing ſuppoſed; he doth not ſay, *If any man hath ſinned heretofore*, in the Pretertenſe, but he ſpeakes of the time preſent, *If any man ſin*, that is, if any man doe ſin; there are ſome things that are ſpoken of the preſent time that are in force but onely that very inſtant in which they are ſpoken; and that inſtant being paſt, the thing it ſelfe is alſo paſt. But for this

expreſſion

expreſſion, *If any man doe ſinne*, it is not a tranſient, but a permanet expreſſion: The Apoſtle ſpeakes not only of his time, and of the people of his time, *If any man ſin* now; the words are not to be underſtood of that very inſtant onely, and exclusively, as having reference onely to thoſe that did ſin in his time, then theſe words ſhould have been tranſient: But the meaning of the Apoſtle is, that the preſent of which hee ſpake, ſhould bee a ſtanding preſent time, and the words ſhould be of force for preſent, even as long as the Word of God ſhould remain upon record. *If any man ſin.* So that the words are to bee underſtood of this preſent time, and all preſent times that ſhall bee in the next age that ſhall ſucceed: If any man ſinne now, or if any man ſin in the next age; ſo that there is to be underſtood a perpetuity of preſent time, to bee included in this expreſſion (*If any man do ſinne*). It is of great concernment, beloved, that you receive this truth, unleſſe you exclude your ſelves from the bene t of the Advocateſhip of Chriſt: For, if the words were ſpoken of the preſent time, and intended only for that time wherein they were expreſſed, what ſhould become of us, that live ſo many ages after that time? They muſt therefore be of a perpetuall and permanent being.

Thirdly, note in the ſuppoſition, the nature

of it, *if any man ſinne*, ſaith the Apoſtle; this word [*If*] here admits of a double conſtruction; either the Suppoſition imports a thing poſſible, but not likely, or a thing that may be likely to come to paſſe, or rather a thing that may, and will come to paſſe. Either it is a ſuppoſition, in caſe a thing is, which it may bee, will not, or a ſuppoſition by way of confeſſion and granting of the thing ſuppoſed. In this place, *John* puts not the word *If* by way of ſuppoſition, as if it were onely likely there ſhould bee a ſinning? and if there were a ſinning, there were an Advocate; but he puts the word here by way of conceſſion, as if hee had ſaid, there muſt and will be ſinning; We Gods own people, ſhall fall into ſin, it cannot be denied. But for refuge, when there is ſuch ſinnes committed, know that there is an Advocate with the Father, *Jeſus Chriſt the righteous*. Thus you have the firſt part of the Text branched out unto you; namely the Apoſtles *Suppoſition*.

Secondly, conſider the *Proviſion* that the Lord by the Apoſtle holds forth unto perſons that are Beleevers, the Members of Chriſt. I ſay, the proviſion the Lord holds out by the Apoſtle for their indempnity againſt theſe ſins that they do, or ſhall commit; namely *We have an Advocate with the Father*.

In this Proviſion obſerve,

First,

Firſt, the office aſſigned for the making good of ſuch proviſion.

The office aſſigned here, is mentioned in theſe words, *We have an Advocate with the Father.*

Secondly, note in this proviſion, the perſon to whom this office of Advocateſhip is given, and therein the ability and qualification of this perſon to this office to manage it effectually, in theſe words, *Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.*

Thirdly, the iſſue and the event of the execution of this office, in theſe words, *He is the propitiation for our ſins.*

In the office that the Lord ſets on foot for the proviſion of indemnity againſt ſin, being committed, you may obſerve in it:

1. The office it ſelfe, and that is an Advocateſhip.

2. The propriety of this office, or the relation of it to the perſons that are the members of Chriſt. The Apoſtle doth not ſay ſimply and abſtractively, *there is* an Advocate, but he ſpeaks relatively, we have an Advocate, that is, *our Advocate*, &c.

Thirdly, this Advocate is ſet forth, not only in his relation to men, as he is their advocate, but he is declared alſo, and ſet forth as he hath relation unto God: Hee doth not ſay ſimply, we have an Advocate: but I ſay, the Apoſtle doth declare the excellency of this of-

fice of advocateſhip in reſpect of this circumſtance, *With the Father*, we have an Advocate, and that *with the Father*, we have an Advocate he is ours, and not only ſo, but he is an Advocate of ours which the Father, which notes unto us, that the plea of Chriſt for indemnity from ſin, is not in any inferi our Court, where, if there bee a ſentence of acquittance, procured, there may be a charge from an higher Court: But the Advocateſhip of Chriſt is managed for our good, in the higheſt Court of all, with the higheſt Judge; that when hee gets a ſentence, it is definitive and determinative, and there is no other Court that can take upon it the determination of the caſe, or call in queſtion the triall of that which hath been determined there.

Laſtly, the proviſion in reſpect of the office aſſigned, is excellently illuſtrated by the circumſtance of time, when the office is on foot, or when the officer doth manage it. The Text doth not ſay, we had an Advocate, or we ſhall have one hereafter, but he ſpeaks in the Preſent Tenſe, *We have an Advocate*, that now is to agitate it. It is but a cold comfort for a man to ſay, being now a begger, he had abundance of wealth, neither doth it give him fulneſſe of comfort, to ſay that he ſhall have abundance of wealth hereafter; but herein lyes his comfort

fort and happinesse, that he can say in truth, I am rich, I have abundance of all things. It is but cold comfort for a man, to say, I had a friend in Court once, but he is dead now; If he had been alive now, it had been better with me then it is, I should have sped well, I had then carried the cause on my side, hee would have done so and so for me. I, but here lies a mans comfort, that he hath a friend at Court that will doe him a good office at his need: The Apostle saith here, *we have an Advocate.* As therefore I said of the present being of sin committed; so I say of the present being of our Advocate. It must not be understood to be a transient, but a permanent sentence, it was in force in the Apostles time, it is as full in force in our time; and we may as well and truly say, *Wee have an Advocate*; and in after ages, the Church of God shall say, to the end of the world, in their times, as truly as we now, and the Apostle in his time said, *We have an Advocate with the Father.*

Secondly, consider here the person managing this office of Advocateship, who is described unto us by three admirable and notable titles, that are proper and full for the comfort and incouragement of those whose Advocate he is: He is *Jesus Christ the righteous*, saith the Text, this is our Advocate. First, he is *Jesus*,

and that is a word that imports a Saviour, as the Angel expounded it, *Luke* 1. *And they ſhall call his name Jeſus, for hee ſhall ſave his people from their ſins.* An admirable encouragement to lift up the heads of dejected and drooping ſpirits, when the Advocate comes to plead: this Advocate is their Saviour, that is, his plea is of ſuch force and prevalency, that he ſaves his client.

Object. But ſome may ſay, many times in ſuits of Law, men have skilfull Lawyers to plead for them, which are able to ſave them who are not admitted to plead for them, becauſe they are not called to the Bar.

Anſw. Yea, but this Jeſus is Chriſt too, this Advocate doth not ruſh into this office of his own head, without warrant, but is called to it: For, as you ſhall heare afterwards, the word *Chriſt* imports anointing to the office. Many a good Lawyer indeed, may not be admitted to come to the bar of Common pleas, although he can plead the cauſe of his client the beſt of all, he muſt be authorized and called unto the bar, or elſe he may not ſpeak. But the Advocate provided for the indemnity againſt ſin, is Chriſt, he is called to it.

Thirdly, it is *Jeſus Chriſt the righteus*, and that imports the ſtrength of the plea hee hath, by which he becomes a propitiation for ſin, it

is

is his righteouſneſſe that prevails in heaven, to get the ſentence to go on the ſide of his client.

Laſtly, you may obſerve here, the iſſue what will become of this Advocateſhip, what effect it will have at the laſt. Many men, who have cauſes in ſuit, are reſtleſſe to know how their cauſe will goe, when they come to triall, fain they would know on which ſide the verdict will be given: and it is a great refreſhing to perſons, to know before-hand, that the cauſe will goe on their ſide. Now, the Apoſtle doth here intimate unto us, what will become of the cauſe before it is tried. He is ſuch an Advocate with the Father (ſaith hee) that hee is become the *propitiation* for all the ſins of Gods people, and what that is, we ſhall ſhew hereafter. Beloved, this is a large field of excellent variety of ſweetneſſe and fatneſſe, we muſt take the particulars into conſideration, that wee may diſcuſſe them the more orderly; and I hope it will be no difficulty to gather ſome of the flowers in this garden, and the Spirit of the Lord aſſiſting, there may be ſucking, yea ſucking ſo, that perſons may be ſatisfied that they may *ſuck and bee ſatisfied at the breſts of conſolation.* That wee may the better lay our mouthes to this breaſt, and draw more eaſily the milke thereof, let us briefly conſider theſe particulars.

Firſt, concerning the office here ſpoken of,

we are first to consider, what it is to be an Advocate, and how Christ doth manage this office being in heaven. I say, first, what it is to be an Advocate with the Father, and how Christ doth manage it.

Secondly, whose cause it is that Christ doth undertake to be an Advocate for.

Thirdly, how Christ is gifted and qualified for the comfortable managing of this office of Advocateship.

Fourthly, what it is to have Christ to be the propitiation for the sinnes of his people; this I conceive contains the sum of the whole drift of the Apostle in these words.

To begin with the first, what the office of Advocateship is, and what it is for Christ to be an Advocate, and how hee doth now manage it in heaven for his elect.

First, this office to bee an Advocate, as it is appropriated unto Christ, I doe not finde that it is once more mentioned in all the Scripture besides this place. Of an Intercessor and Redeemer, and the atonement we reade frequently in Scripture, that Christ is all these, but that Christ is an Advocate, we cannot finde where it is mentioned in all the Scripture but in this place, and therefore it will be the more difficult to finde out the intention of the Holy Ghost, what he means by this office of Advocateship.

cateſhip. The word Advocate in the originall is παράκλητος, and the ſame word is uſed by *John* in the 1 of *John* and the 26. verſe, and attributed unto the Holy Ghoſt, and is there tranſlated the *Comforter*, παράκλητος, ſaith the Text, *The Comforter will come.* Now, the ſame word that we have here *Advocate*, is alſo παράκλητος. And indeed, the proper ſingification of the word is, *A Comfortable Advocate.* But the thing it ſelf, What is this Advocateſhip, will you ſay? It is a borrowed expreſſion, and an alluſion, opening the prevalency of Chriſt with the Father, for his owne people; it is taken from an office among men. Advocates in the Common Law, you call them Counſellors, but in the Civill Law, they have this very title of Advocate. The office is this; namely, being well experienced in the nature of the Law, and the Rules and Principles of Juſtice; when ever a cauſe comes to be tried, they are to make clear the Principles of Juſtice, and ſo to plead out Juſtice on the behalfe of the client, for whom they plead. I ſay, the office of an Advocate is, to plead the cauſe of a perſon as it ſtands in equity and juſtice, and to demand and require a ſentence of acquittance and diſcharge from Juſtice and equity it ſelfe. Herein an Advocate differs from a Suppliant: a Suppliant makes only requeſts, and depends altogether upon favour

vour alone, ſo as if hee ſhould ſtand to the rigor of Juſtice, he muſt bee gone, and his cauſe muſt miſcarry: I ſay, this is the proper office of a Suppliant or Petitioner; but an Advocate, hee ſtands to the juſtice of a perſon, whoſe cauſe hee doth plead, and puts the iſſue of the triall even to Juſtice it ſelfe; that as the cauſe can bee cleared to bee a juſt cauſe, ſo the Judge would paſſe a ſentence upon the cauſe: juſt ſo, I ſay, is it with Chriſt pleading the cauſe of his own people with the Father, in reſpect of indempnity from ſin; for his Advocateſhip is this, namely, to lay the Law to the Father, to plead juſtice in the diſcharge of the ſinner that doth commit ſinne, that it is but right and juſtice to diſcharge him: and it were an unrighteous thing, and injuſtice, if he ſhould not; I ſay, it is moſt certainly true that Chriſt ſtands here upon juſtice, and he will in righteouſneſſe have God to diſcharge his own people from all the ſins that they do commit; and hee pleads that it is an unrighteous thing, to charge them with them, or to plague or puniſh them for them.

Object. But ſome peradventure, will be ready to ſay, this cannot be, that Chriſt as an Advocate, ſhould plead for indempnity upon terms of juſtice, for in the ſtrictneſſe, and the rigor of juſtice, the ſoule that ſinneth muſt die: And

the

the Goſpel ſeems to ſay, it is onely and ſolely Grace that any perſon is diſcharged from ſin: For in juſtice there cannot be a claime made of pardon and diſcharge from ſin, but all the plea muſt be meerly bounty and favour.

Anſw. This objection ſeems to have a great deale of ſtrength in it. How may theſe two things ſtand together, that Chriſt pleading juſtice, God muſt forgive; and yet notwithſtanding juſtice doth ſentence a perſon unto death, if he ſins? For anſwer to this, you muſt learn to diſtinguiſh, and I deſire you warily to obſerve this diſtinction, that ſo you may plainly ſee a reconciliation of that which ſeems impoſſible to be reconciled: I ſay, obſerve this diſtinction, namely, firſt, conſider the pardon or diſcharge from ſin, in regard of any thing laid down in conſideration of the ſin committed by the perſon who doth partake of this pardon. And ſecondly, conſider this pardon, or indemnity and diſcharge from ſin in reference unto Chriſt who gets this diſcharge. Now, I ſay, in the former conſideration, that is, in reſpect of us that do partake of this diſcharge from ſin, and in regard of any thing that we can bring in recompence for that ſin, or ſatisfie, in this regard it is meerly and only Grace, that ſinners being the members of Chriſt are diſcharged. When you, or I commit ſin, that God doth diſcharge us,

us, that God doth not lay our ſins to us, that God doth not give ſentence of damnation upon us for ſuch and ſuch ſins as we do commit. I ſay, it is an act of meer Grace alone, Juſtice cannot be pleaded in this caſe.

But, ſecondly, conſider the indemnity from ſin, in reſpect of Chriſt, who doth get this diſcharge, and doth purchaſe it of the Father. Then Chriſt is to bee conſidered two wayes: Firſt, as Chriſt is allowed by the Father to ſtand in the room of ſuch perſons, whoſe cauſe he pleads: Or, ſecondly, Chriſt is to be conſidered, as he hath actually made full payment unto the Father, his ſatisfaction being allowed and admitted before thereunto. Now, I anſwer, conſidering Chriſt in his being allowed by the Father, to ſtand in the room of the perſons whoſe cauſe he pleads; ſo this diſcharge from ſin by Chriſt, it is an act of Grace; Chriſt cannot plead juſtice, that he ſhould be allowed. There was not a tye upon the Father, that Chriſt ſhould bee in mans room, and that the Father ſhould be unrighteous, if hee did not ordain him to bee ſo; it was an act of free Grace in God, when men were under the curſe, and became miſerable bankrupts, that Chriſt ſhould make ſatisfaction for them: When one man doth owe another money, it is not an unrighteous act in this creditor to refuſe a ſurety, he

he may make the debtor pay the debt himselfe, if he will; it is matter of grace, it is meer courtesie so to doe: Even so it is matter of grace, that Christ is admitted to come in the roome of man, and to stand in the stead of man, to beare the sins of man. For him to be admitted to beare the wrath of God for these sins that another hath committed, this is an act of grace; and in regard of these particulars, is the Scripture so frequent in these expressions of the free Grace of God, in communicating this discharge, and pardon of sin unto sinners. But, secondly, consider, Christ allowed of the Father to stand in the room of men, as he hath come forth, and paid down the utmost farthing that God in justice could demand for, or in consideration of these sins that are committed by his people: I say, when Christ hath deposited, or delivered up into the hands of his Father the utmost farthing that hee could charge upon Believers, or demand on their behalfe; this being received by the Father, acknowledgement being made by him, upon the receipt of what Christ hath paid, this, I say, considered, it is an act of justice and righteousnesse, that the Father should justifie and acquit these persons, for whom he hath received of Christ this satisfaction, and accordingly hath acknowledged satisfaction under his own hand

and

and acquitted them. You know, though it bee in a mans power and liberty whether hee will take a ſurety, or the principall for his money, yet when he hath taken a ſurety, and he hath made payment, it is an act of unrighteouſneſſe in the creditor, after the acknowledgement of full ſatisfaction, to come upon the principall again, and to make him pay the money. And it is a plea grounded in Law, that if that cauſe come in triall again, the Judge ought to acquit the principall, if it bee proved that the debt is paid by the ſurety. Now, Chriſt hath paid all that the Father could ask, and God hath acknowledged full ſatisfaction for all: *He beheld the travell of his ſoule, and was ſatisfied.* Now, being ſatisfied, it is an act of juſtice and righteouſneſſe, that the Father ſhould acquit a perſon in this kind: Suppoſe a perſon ſhould bee brought before a Judge in a cauſe wherein hee oweth the Judge himſelf ſuch a ſumme of moneyes, and borrowed it of the Judge himſelf, an Advocate comes and pleads the cauſe before the Judge, that it is true, there was ſo much money lent, and borrowed, but, ſaith the Advocate, I my ſelfe became the ſurety for that man, I paid every farthing, here is the acquittance you gave under your own hand. Now, I aſk this queſtion, the Judge being convinced, and a righteous Judge too, of the truth of the plea,

plea, whether in judgement he ought not to acquit that perſon, whoſe cauſe is pleaded before him? He tooke ſatisfaction, he acknowledged ſatisfaction, he could have but ſatisfaction of him, therefore in iuſtice he muſt diſcharge him. The ſame caſe is betweene God and us; it is true indeed, Beleevers doe commit thoſe things that are in their own nature debts: *Forgive us our debts*, as the word is: but when this cauſe came to be agitated, and pleaded before God the Judge himſelfe, to whom the debt was owing, Chriſt the Advocate came, and ſtood up and pleaded, that he himſelfe being become the ſurety of a better teſtament, upon it he came, and paid the whole debt, and hee having ſatisfied his Father, hee received under his Fathers hand, that he had paid every farthing, and that he was ſatisfied, and that upon that ſatisfaction his people ſhould be diſcharged. Now, this plea is grounded upon iuſtice it ſelfe; Obſerve but how fully and clearly the Apoſtle ſpeakes the ſame things in the 1. of *John* 1. 7. the Apoſtle tels us expreſly, that *the blood of Chriſt his Son, cleanſeth from all ſins*; and here, *If any man ſinne, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and hee is the propitiation for our ſins*; and againe, in the former Chapter, *If we confeſſe our ſinnes, God is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſins.* Mark well that the Apoſtle grounds himſelfe

himſelf upon Chriſts ſatisfaction; namely, his blood that doth cleanſe us from all ſin. Upon this ground hee doth conclude, that it is an act of faithfulneſſe and juſtice in God, to forgive ſinne. I dare ſay, none are ſo ignorant in theſe daies of light, as to thinke there is ſuch a proportion between confeſſion of ſin, and forgiveneſſe of ſinne, that confeſſion can ballance forgiveneſſe, and ſo conſequently, make it an act of juſtice. No, the Apoſtle doth ground the force of juſtice upon the blood of Chriſt that is ſhed. Therfore, if you do obſerve it well, you ſhall find that the Apoſtle ſpeakes of confeſſion, by way of anticipation, or prevention of fear; you know the common Proverb in the world concerning a Malefactor apprehended, is, *Let him confeſſe*, ſay wee, *and he ſhall be hanged.* Why ſo? becauſe, if it be diſcloſed, the Law lays hold upon him, and hee ſhall be ſure to die for it; and therefore, in naturall policy, his ſafety lies in concealing of it. But now, if ſatisfaction hath beene made by a friend of his to the Law, and accordingly a pardon ſued out for him, there is no danger in his confeſſion at all. Now, the Apoſtle in this place, having before ſaid, that the blood of Chriſt his Sonne cleanſeth us from all our ſinnes, from hence he gathers incouragement unto the people of Chriſt, that they ſhould not fear, ſo as to conceal their ſins,

leſt

leſt being known, they ſhould do them a miſchief. But ſaith he, lay all open before the Lord, there is no danger to be ſuſpected now: For God is faithfull and juſt to forgive them; therefore the hiding of them ſhould prevent no evill, becauſe no evill ſhould come upon them for them, though they were laid open never ſo naked. Therefore was this ſpoken by the Apoſtle, to take away fear; and this is the true meaning of the Holy Ghoſt therein: I ſay, to take away fear from the damage that would enſue, if we ſhould confeſſe our ſins what they are. *Paul* writing to *Timothy*, mark what he aſcribes to participating of the excellencies of Chriſt, even of righteouſneſſe and juſtice: *I have fought the good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith, henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſſe*: Marke, *a crown of righteouſneſſe is laid up*, in which is included the diſcharge from ſin, and participating of glory, and a crown of righteouſneſſe prepared and laid up: But mark the foundation of his confidence, that he ſhall partake of it, It is a righteous Judge that ſhall give it, he ſhall give it out of righteouſneſſe it ſelf, juſtice ſhall prevail with him to do this thing for him. Whence it is, that Chriſt is called ſo frequently, *Righteouſneſſe*, *The Lord our righteouſneſſe*, as you have it in the 33. of *Jeremiah*, a Propheſie

concerning the righteous *Branch*, and his name ſhall be called, *The Lord our righteouſneſſe*, *that* is, the Lord that is righteous, makes us one with God, and doth communicate his own righteouſneſſe unto us, that we may be the delight of the Father. Give me leave to tell you, beloved, that God is ſo unchangeable in all his Attributes, that even Chriſt himſelf is not able to obtain any thing of the Father that may be any wayes prejudiciall to the nullifying of any attribute whatſoever; I ſay, Chriſt himſelf can get nothing of the Father, whereby his juſtice may ſuffer, or be violated. Chriſt muſt make it cleer, that juſtice ſhall have its full due, and God ſhall not need to bate one grain of what juſtice doth expect, or elſe Chriſt himſelfe can have nothing of the Father: For Chriſt came not to deſtroy the Law, and ſo he ſaith himſelf, much leſſe did Chriſt come to deſtroy that which is eſſentiall unto God. Gods juſtice is eſſentiall unto him,: If Chriſt violate juſtice, he ſhould deſtroy the very being of God himſelfe. Therefore without giving juſtice ſatisfaction, this would be a derogation to the Father; therefore when Chriſt doth plead with the Father for the ſons of men, that they might have diſcharge from ſin, he doth make it manifeſt that all he doth aske of the Father he doth ask according unto juſtice; nay, Chriſt makes it to

appeare

appear that justice is as much satisfied in discharging of Believers from their sins, as it is in the damnation of the Reprobates in hell for their sins. Justice hath no more right in their damnation, then it hath in the others acquittance and discharge. In the damnation of the Reprobates in Hell, to satisfie justice, there is no more but the wrath of God revealed from Heaven, and executed upon them. Now for those Believers that are the members of Christ, and are discharged by Christ from their sins, the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, and poured out upon his Son in their behalf, who sustained in respect of the proportion of justce equivalently to all the torments the Reprobates in Hell do sustain. So that Christ hath as fully satisfied the justice of God for his elect, as it is satisfied in the damned in Hell, who suffer in their own persons. Surely there had been no need of Christs coming into the world, if Believers might have been saved, and justice violated without satisfaction: But now justice had been violated, had not a proportionable recompence been made before the sin had been discharged from off the person committing the same. Therefore the *Psalmist* speaks admirably, when he saith, *Mercy and Truth hath met together, and Righteousnesse and Peace have kissed each other*: This place is appropriated unto

Christ, shewing, that in managing the work of Redemption of the sons of men, as he doth exalt Mercy, so he doth not diminish Justice and Righteousnesse, but carries the businesse so, that they both of them have their due, and both of them have so their due, that they agree one with another; nay, they do imbrace and kisse each other: they come to rejoyce and triumph in the satisfaction of each other. And therefore it is but an ignorant imagination in the hearts of some men, that God will grow more remisse, in respect of the sins of his own people; that God is not so much offended with the nature of sin, after Christ died, as before: For God hath all the abhorring, detesting thoughts of sin in the nature of it, since Christ is dead, as he had before he died. It is altogether as abominable unto him as before it was: Christ did not come to make sin lesse filthy to the Lord, or to make a person, where sin is, more lovely, or lesse hatefull before God but rather declares, and sets forth the wrath of God against sin in the highest degree. Where ever the Lord seeth sin, and not Christ upon the person taking away that sin, the Lord cannot but hate both the sin, and the sinner. All the pleasure the God takes in the sons of men, proceeds from a purity Christ put upon them, and the taking away of that sinfulnesse from them which

which otherwiſe could not but ſtir up indignation and wrath in the Lord againſt the perſons where he findes it. I ſay, this is the ground upon which Chriſt pleads juſtice, that to it might appear there is no violation of it, but the Lord is as well ſatisfied as if the perſon tranſgreſſing had lain under the wrath deſerved, in his own perſon. I could wish I were able to ſpeak to you in ſo full and cleer language, that not one dram of this glorious myſterie of this Goſpel of Chriſt might be hid for the comforting and refreſhing of your ſpirits. The thing I drive at, being, that all the people of Chriſt might know wherein lies their ſtrong conſolation, not in themſelves, as if they did not ſin; nor in themſelves, as if they could make amends for their ſins; but in him who hath made perfect amends for them, and in whom they are accepted with the Father, (as if they themſelves in their own perſons had made this amends) who hath preſented them ſo compleat in himſelf unto the Fathers eye, that the Lord is pleaſed to looke upon them as upon his own innocent Son, and to take pleaſure in them with the ſame pleaſure that he takes in his Beloved. And if ever you mean to have your conſciences and your conſolations eſtabliſhed, and well grounded, concerning the pardon of your ſins, you muſt ſee that Chriſt hath onely pleaded,

and doth plead our your acquittance and discharge, and thus your indemnity, even to the satisfying of justice it self. For if justice be not yet satisfyed: if the Lord hath yet a plea against your sons, & if Christ hath not fully answered it, but left his plea with God, who shall stand up before him: Christ being silent to plead for you? Gods justice comes in and pleads terribly against you, and will exact satisfaction of you; therefore you must receive this principle, if you will be established in consolation; that as there is mercy in respect of us, who bring nothing in consideration of our sins: so there is righteousnesse and justice in forgiving of sin, in respect of Christ our Advocate, that doth manage his office, and makes it known for this very end, that in knowledge thereof we might have the stronger consolation.

SERMON V.

1 John 2. verſ. 1, 2.

My little children, theſe things I write unto you, that you ſin not: And if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins.

WE have formerly (as ſome of you may remember) entered upon theſe words; wherein the Apoſtle makes the propoſall of the Grace of God in Chriſt, the encouragement unto people to forbear ſin. The firſt thing we noted therefore from hence, was this: That the knowledge of an Advocate that becomes a propitiation for ſin, even for ſuch as do commit ſin; I ſay, the knowledge of this Grace is ſo far from opening a gap unto a licentious life, that indeed, it is the beſt means and help in the world to keep us from ſinning. The laſt day we fell upon the matter of the Argu-

ment which the Apostle useth, to dissuade little children from sin: *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous* Herein we proposed to be considered,

First, what this Advocateship of Christ is, and how Christ doth manage this office of Advocateship.

Secondly, whose cause it is that Christ doth here plead.

Thirdly, how Christ is gifted and qualified for this office of Advocateship.

Lastly, what the issue of this Advocateship of Christ is, proposed in the last words of the Text; *He is the propitiation for our sins.*

Concerning the first, what this office of Advocateship is; the summe is briefly this. The office of an Advocate is to plead out the cause of a man, as it is in justice and right; so that the Advocateship of Christ consists in pleading forth the discharge of his people, even from the principle of right and justice.

Whereas it is objected and indeed seems a thing unreconcilable; namely, that this discharge from sin, goes all along under the notion of Grace, and free Grace, and pardon, how can this be, if it be meerly an act of justice, for God to forgive sins?

This may easily be reconciled with a distinction; discharge from sin, in respect of us, or what

what we can bring by way of recompence for the ſin committed, is meerly free Grace. Wee can bring nothing at all. Alſo in reſpect of Chriſt as he is allowed to ſtand in the room of us, it is Grace too. But, thirdly, Chriſt being allowed and admitted, and the Lord having taken the full payment he could ask at the hands of Chriſt, and acknowledging ſatisfaction upon ſuch payment; this act of Chriſt makes it an act of juſtice and right, that God ſhould forgive ſins; and therefore the Apoſtle in the firſt Chapter of this Epiſtle of *John*, tells us, *That the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, cleanſeth us from all our ſins*: And therefore he concludes, that *he is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſins.* But I cannot inſiſt upon what I have formerly delivered. Now, peradventure ſome (though I confeſſe a little over-curious) deſire to underſtand how Chriſt, being now in Heaven, doth execute this office of Advocateſhip, or in what ſenſe he is ſaid to plead the cauſe of his people. I call it a curious querie, becauſe the Scriptures are very ſparing in declaring the manner of Chriſts managing this office. That he is an Advocate, is cleer enough; how he doth deale with God in the execution of it, is more obſcure. Frequent mention is made indeed of Chriſts interceſſion in Heaven; *he ever liveth to make interceſſion for us*, as the Apoſtle

Apostle testifieth, *he doth intercede for the Saints*, saith the holy Ghost, yet though this be so frequently mentioned, and the comfort of Gods people much laid upon this; namely, this intercession: yet the Scriptures are very sparing what kind of intercession he makes whether he prays to his Father in heaven, as he did upon earth, or no? The like I say of this business of Advocateship. Some few passages of Scripture there are, that will give some hint, at least to have some glimmerings of the very manner of Christs Advocateship, and the execution of it. In *Heb.* 11. 4. there is something that will give us some light: *By faith*, saith the Apostle, *Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice then Cain, whereby he received*, or *obtained witnesse of God, that he was righteous, by which, he being dead, yet speaketh*; that is, by which sacrifice, he being dead, yet speaketh. The sacrifices, you know, they were Christ in the Antitype: for all the life of sacrifices from which persons obtain testimony of God, that they are righteous; is Christ himself. And it is Christ in sacrifice that speaks, even when the sacrifice it selfe is offered. I conceive therefore, beloved, as sacrifices speak in respect of a prevailing power they have with God, when he sits in judgement: we are to conceive likewise of the Advocateship of Christ, which is nothing else but the speaking of Christ, is in such

such a kinde managed after such a manner: Christ speaks as sacrifice speaks; for indeed, Christ as Advocate, pleads only as a sacrifice for man. In the 12th Chapter of the same Epistle, and the 14. verse, you have another expression, having a little more cleerenesse in it. *We are come*, saith the Apostle, *to Mount Sion, the City of the living God, to an innumerable company of Angels; and to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things then the blood of Abel.* Here you see whereas the Apostl in the former Chapter imports a voyce, or a plea in the mouth of sacrifices, in this Chapter and verse, he speaks more plainly, and puts a voyce or plea to that which is the life of sacrifices; namely, the blood of sprinkling, the blood of Jesus Christ: *Wee are come unto the blood of sprinkling.* And this blood is that which speaks better things then the blood of *Abel.* You know that there was a strong plea in the blood of *Abel*, which cryed from earth to heaven, till it brought vengance upon the head of *Cain.* The blood of Christ hath a stronger plea, and hath a stronger cry, and is for better purposes: So that under favour (for in this I shall not contend much) so far as I can see, the value, and working, and desert and preciousnesse of the bloodshed of Christ, that is the plea that Christ makes

makes as Advocate in heaven ; that when a Believer doth commit sin , the efficacy of this blood-shed is fresh in the presence of the Lord, in the behalfe of that poore wretch that hath thus sinned ; I say, the blood is present, and the whole efficacy , power and vertue of that blood is fresh in the thoughts of the Lord. And as it is thus effectuall and powerfull, it procures the discharge , and brings the discharge and acknowledgement of the Lord to his thoughts too, (if I may so speak) whereby he is pacified towards them, and pleased with them. This is alwayes before him, and present with him; yea; present before him, when the sins that a Believer commits are present ; and the counterplea of the value of the blood of Christ, overcomes the naturall plea of the sin it selfe. But I will not dwell upon this, but rather hasten to a second thing very considerable, which is,

Whose cause it is that Christ doth plead with the Father : or , for whom the value and vertue of his blood doth plead. I remember the Disciples when Christ spake generally concerning his betraying , were very inquisitive. *Is it I*, saith one ? *Is it I*, saith another ? I doubt not, but in regard of the prevalency, of the plea of the blood of Christ , many persons present will fal upon this inquiry: Is it I that he means? is he my Advocate ? Am I his client to plead my

my cauſe? I ſhall endeavour to make it cleer, and to reſolve it, as the Apoſtle doth here propoſe it.

The plea that Chriſt puts up for the perſons whoſe cauſe he doth undertake, are firſt, all ſorts of Believers whatſoever, high or low, rich or poor; nay, ſtrong or weak; Chriſt, I ſay, pleads their cauſe, he is the Advocate of the weakeſt Believer in the world; Nay, more, he is the Advocate of the weakeſt Believer, when he is the greateſt ſinner, I mean, when he falls foulely, when he falls, it may be, through the weakneſſe of his faith, making him ſuſpect that Chriſt will be ſilent in his cauſe, in regard of ſuch failings and ſinfulneſſe; I ſay, he is then as properly the Advocate of ſuch a perſon a Believer, who, peradventure, falls into ſome ſcandalous evill, at that very time when this perſon that is a Believer falls thus: Mark but the Apoſtle, *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father*; he makes no exception, neither in reſpect of perſons, nor in reſpect of ſins. *If any man ſin*, he do th not ſay, if any man ſin meerly of infirmity and common frailty; but in generall, *If any man ſin*; as if he had ſaid, there muſt ſomething be done by Believers, that goes beyond the being of ſin, before they can be excluded from having intereſt in the Advocateſhip of Chriſt. Here the Apoſtle ſpeaks expreſly,

presly, there is an Advocateship of Christ for Believers sinning, without exception. I know it is too frequent among many, that more grosse sins then ordinary in a Believer, do not only waste the conscience, but do also interpose between such a person and Christ, of which we shall have occasion to speak elsewhere: For present there is a conceit, that if a Believer sin more then ordinarily, presently there is just cause for him to suspect Christ will not sufficiently manage his office for him, at least Christ hath not sufficiently managed it already; so that there is just cause of feare. But let me tell you, to the everlasting consolation of Gods people, that there is no sin which a Believer can commit, which can exclude him from the benifit of this Advocateship, or bring him beyond the bounds of this large grant: *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father.* And if it be *any man*, you will say, it extends to all men in the world, as well as Believers, if any man sin. Nay, there is a restraint in the words, and you shall easily see it: If any man sin, *we have* an Advocate with the Father. If any of us that have fellowship with the Father and the Son: it is not every one that hath Christ for an Advocate, but those that are Believers. Those that have right to fellowship with the Father and the Son, are only spoken of in this place.

I speak this, to the end that those, who through fear of death, are subject unto bondage all their lives long, may know that Christ is come to deliver them, and reveales this truth on purpose to deliver them from the feare of death, and bondage, by being their Advocate for their sins. He is an Advocate, he is a propitiation for every sin of his. The words run in the generall to the end: *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, and he is the propitiation for our sins.* The Apostle doth not say, he is not an Advocate for such and such, but for such and such Believers, that sin so, and so; if they commit sin so and so agravated, and if their sins rise to such an height, there is no propitiation for them. But the Apostle speaks in the generall style; *If any man sin*, and he is the propitiation for *our sins*; and yet, beloved, I must be bold to goe a little further in respect of the persons whose cause Christ doth plead, and in whose behalf Christ is an Advocate; I say, it is for all sorts of Believers; nay, I go further, it is for more then present Believers, even for some who are not for the present Believers, but remaine as yet in a state of unbelief. In brief, Christ is the Advocate of the cause of every person in the world, for whom he paid the price of redemption, whether they be persons already called, or persons not yet acquainted with the Grace

Grace of God: for every Elect person, as well unconverted, as converted, Christ doth equally, in respect of the substance of his plea, interpose; but when I say he pleads as well for the unconverted, as for the converted, I mean for such unconverted persons, as do belong unto the election of Grace, and have their portion in the price of his blood. Beloved, for mine own part, I cannot yet conceive any other considerable difference, between the plea of Christ for the converted persons, and the Elect unconverted, but this circumstantiall difference; namely, that the value of his blood is equally of force, to Believers and unbelievers, being elected, saving that the Believers have this priviledge, that the Lord Christ pleads for the manifestation of this discharge unto this converted person, but pleads not for the present manifestation thereof unto the unconverted elect person, tell such time as he shall be called to the faith, and by that faith, that thing be made evident which before was hid: I say, the pardon of sin by the blood of Christ, is as full for the unconverted elect person, as fully passed over in grant, I mean, to that person, as to the Believer himself. God doth add never a tittle of pardon it self more to him that is a Believer, then to that person not yet converted to the faith, in regard of the substance of the pardon

is

it ſelf. For the cleering of this to you; I beſeech you note what is the riſe or ground-work of the pardon of ſin. Secondly, note when this pardon of ſin is compleat with God. Theſe two things conſidered, you ſhal perceive that all the pardon, in reſpect of the ſubſtance of it, that God paſſeth over unto men, he doth paſſe it over before their converſion. Look, I ſay, upon the riſe; the true riſe, or originall of the pardon of ſin, is the gracious grant of God, upon the blood of Chriſt ſhed. This is the onely foundation of pardon; I ſay, Gods gracious grant upon the ſheding of the blood of Chriſt, there is no pardon appliable to any perſon in the world, but what pardon is to be found in the word of Grace. Thou that art a Believer at preſent, thou haſt the pardon of thy ſins in thy ſpirit, thou art aſſured of it; Where hadſt thou this pardon? Didſt thou not fetch it out of the word of Grace? Then as ſoon as the word of Gods Grace was firſt publiſhed, this Grace of the pardon of ſin was held forth. If thou found'eſt it not here, thou found'ſt it ſome where elſe; but tell me, where will you have this Grant of God to build upon, if you will not have it in the word of Grace? You will ſay, the Spirit of God will reveale it unto you. It is true indeed; but if the Spirit of the Lord doth reveal a grant to you of Grace, it is ac-

cording to his Word. The Spirit speaking out of the word of Grace to men, speakes no otherwise but according to this word of Grace in men; and if that there be a contradiction between the inward voyce, and this word of Grace, that is enough to give you cause of suspicion; yea, you may be confident, that that voice within you, in respect of such contradiction, is a false voyce; I say, that the Lord Christ sends us unto his Word, and from the word we take out the pardon of sin we have. Now, beloved, I beseech you consider, if all pardon to all the Elect to the end of the world be contained in this word of Grace, there is no more pardon then what is written there; then it must needs follow, that God passed over his act of pardon of sin at that instant, when he entred this pardon in the volume of his Book. Is there no pardon till thou art converted and called? then the pardon of all thy sins are not to be found in this word of Grace, because this word of Grace was written before thy conversion: So that either you must deny the pardon that is properly and truly revealed in the word of Grace and must seek out some newer then is revealed, or you must acknowledge the pardon that is granted unto men, is in regard of the substance of it, as I said, as soon as he had left it in the volume of his Book. So that it is plain, that

as

as Believers coming to believe, fetch out of this word of Grace their pardon; ſo unconverted perſons elected, have their Grace equally in this word, only the Lord hides the publication of it to them, till ſuch time as he is pleaſed to call them, and give them faith to read their portion here, as other Believers have read theirs before. Its true indeed, though the pardon of every unconverted elect perſon be equally paſſed over by the Lord, yet till the converſion of ſuch perſons, he gives no more hint of it to ſuch perſons than he gives to the Reprobates themſelves. This is that wil take away the ſuſpected inconveniencies that may follow upon the pardon already granted before converſion: For whereas men may think this will make unconverted men preſume, to know their pardon before converſion: I ſay, it is true, there is ſuch a pardon for him, but he knowes it not, nor ever ſhall he know it, till he be brought out of darkneſſe to the glorious light of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Otherwiſe how can it be true, that all the ſins of Gods people, paſt, preſent, and to come, are all of them at once pardoned, as the godly learned *Proteſtants* ſay? I ſay, how can this be true, except there be pardon paſſed before converſion? Whence ſhall a Believer coming to believe, fetch all his comfort, that all his ſins, while he was in rebellion were pardoned, if

there were not a grant of this pardon extant before; upon which, as upon a sure foundation, his believing might stay it self? How comes it to passe, that persons are not cut off before they are called; if their sins are not pardoned, which stand between the wrath of God and them? Nothing else but the blood of Christ stands between them, even between the destroying wrath of God, and Gods people that do commit sin, even before conversion. In a word, where will you finde a new act of God since the grants that are registered here in the Book of God? Certain I am, that the persons pardoned were not converted, when this was made: And if there be, or come after this was first made, a new grant, either it must be entred a new here, or it must be in a new book by it self. If therefore all the pardons are as ancient as this record is, then all pardons whatsoever are ancienter then the present believing of any person that now liveth. Hence we may let persons know, that it is but a rash expression to say that such and such a person is in the state of damnation (if it be meant he is so before God) while he remains in the state of unconversion, and the wrath of God abides upon that person, the ungelected, till he be called.

Beloved, let me tell you, the state of the unconverted elected person, is as sure from danger of

of finall miſcarriages as the eſtate of a Saint in glory; Saints in glory ſtands in glory by the blood of Chriſt alone, the ſame blood hath purchaſed the pardon of ſin for the unconverted, elect perſon; ſo that the ſame dicharging of them, by the blood of Chriſt, concerns the one as much as it doth another. But I ſay, ſtill the unconverted perſon cannot make any concluſions from all this, becauſe he cannot know his portion till he come to believe.

The third thing I propoſed, is to know how Chriſt is qualified and gifted to ſuch a vocation as this is: His office is of admirable uſe to men. To be a propitiation for the ſins of men, and to get the diſcharge of God manifeſted to a perſon for whom he doth plead, it is of great conſolation. So then it muſt needs be that the Counſel or Advocate that is to plead the cauſe be wel gifted for that imployment. It is too wel known, that a righteous cauſe many a time miſcarries in the world through the deceitfulneſſe or ſimplicity of the Counſel. When men come upon life and death, it concerns them much to have a skilfull Lawyer to plead for them, or elſe for lack of urging that which is moſt neceſſary to be pleaded, the men miſcarry and periſh. The Holy Ghoſt therefore, beloved, is pleaſed to import unto us, not onely that Chriſt is an Advocate, and whoſe cauſe it is that Chriſt

doth plead; but also doth communicate unto us the largenesse of the gifts of Christ, for the managing of this office. I will not go beyond the Text it selfe, to communicate to you the fulnesse of the gifts of Christ, to manage this Advocateship of his, even to that effect and issue that is heart can desire, that is, more then thy heart can desire. There are three titles, appropriated in this place unto Christ, all of them very aptly and sweetly manifesting, the excellent gifts of Christ, as Mediator, or as advocate for, or on the behalf of poore believers, to wit, *Christ Jesus the righteous*; We have an Advocate with the Father *Jesus Christ the righteous*: every title shews how he is gifted.

First, the title *Christ*, contains much in it to strengthen our confidence in this our counsell that is to plead our cause Christ is a word that properly signifies anointed, and is derived from a word which hath the same signification in it. Now, anointing, if you remember well, carries two things along with it:

The first is, the separation or calling of such a person anointed to some speciall office.

The second thing imported by it is, the abilities and gifts of the person for the office he is called unto. So that our Advocate being Christ and called Christ here, this imports unto us: first, the lawfull authorizing and calling of

Christ

Christ unto it, by him that doth indeed, authorize him: Secondly, the full and large abilities Christ hath to manage it.

First, I say, the title *Christ* doth import unto us, Christs lawfull call to plead: You know what the Apostle saith in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was* Aaron. Where he further cleers up, how Christ was called, and lawfully called unto it: *The Lord hath sworn*, saith the same Apostle, *and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of* Melchisedec; Here is his calling. Of what moment is this, will you say? I answer, of great moment, Let Christ be never so able to plead, except the Lord admit him to plead, he must hold his tongue: You know in the common Law it self, there are Students in the Law, and there are Counsellors; then Sergeants at Law; the Students in the Law, it may be, are more able to plead a cause, and can doe it better then some Sergeant at Law, or some others that are called; but yet because he is not called, he, must hold his tongue. Beloved, were Christ our Advocate a Novice, and not graduated, if he were not called to the Bar, though he can plead never so excellently with God, he could not be heard, God will give a call before he heare. So Christ is called.

Yet again, when men are called to be Counsellors, yet they cannot plead at every Bar. At the Common-pleas, none plead but a Sergeant at law; though many Counsellors be able Lawyers, & better gifted then some Sergeants, yet this will not suffice, he is not called to that Bar in speciall, and therefore they must not come till they have the cal as the Sergeants have. The Lord doth not bid us to seek his face without a Mediator, but he that is the Advocate at the Court of Heaven is the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, one Man, the Man Christ. He that hath the best Rethoricke in the world to plead his cause must have him as a Sergeant to plead for him; he cannot be admitted into this Court to plead for himself. The Ministers of God are in some sort the pleaders of our cause, yet they themselves must have this Sergeant to plead for them when they come to this tribunall of God, and he alone is admitted to it. And it is a great matter to know what kinde of Christ he is, that is singled out; and then you must know, that if all the world offer this service unto you to plead your cause before God, it would not avail, if this Man Christ were not freely assign'd and called to plead your cause; you are gone for ever, nothing in the world can be heard but Christ.

Obj. You will say, the servants of God are heard when they pray. *Answ.*

Answ. I say, Christ is onely heard when he Prayes; you must pray in faith, saith *James*, *Let him not think that he shall obtaine any thing at the hand of the Lord that wavers*; he must ask in faith, that is, he must ask in Christ, for faith rests not upon it self, but upon Christ. It is Christ gets every thing for men, it is not they themselves, nor their prayers, but it is Christ that prevails. Now, this Advocate Christ, he speaks his minde, and is admitted to speak his minde to the full: But this is not all, Christ is gifted and qualified that he may plead effectually: There may be some unrighteous Judge in the world, that may call men for favour, as a father calls his son, whether he be gifted and qualified or no, that is not regarded. This man for some by-respects shall come to the Bar, but God is a righteous Judge, a Judge that hath no partiality: Christ indeed is his Son, but Christ his Son is not called meerly for favour, but as he calls his Son, so he breeds his Son: You know, beloved, that at the Inns of Court, the Judges, and primest Lawyers, are teachers of Students, and when they finde them to be proficients, then they call them, and admit them to the Bar. So Christ is the Student, and the Father, he doth instruct and tutor him, he breeds him up, if I may so speak, after the manner of men, to be fit for the Advocateship, and

then

then when he was fit, he put him out unto it. You shall find anointing, as in the word Christ to import gifting of men, when they are called out: *Aaron*, he was anointed, he was gifted to make atonement: and so of *Saul*, when *Samuel* anointed him, the Text saith, *God gave him another*, he gave him a regall *heart*, and when hee made him a King, he gave him the heart of a King, he gave him a kingly spirit. And this was that which *Solomon* prayed for, when the crown was set upon his head, that God would give him a wise and understanding heart, to goe in and out before his great people, and the Lord answered him, and gave him wisdome; so that there was none before him, nor after him like unto him: Even so God did with Christ, he was anointed to be our Advocate, and as he anointed him, he gifted him for it, as he saith, *I have laid help upon one that is mighty*. Christ is the person that must bring help, and therefore his person shall be mighty. In *Psal.* 68. vers. 18. you shall see there, that God did gift Christ, when he called him forth: *Thou art ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men*. Here the office of Christ is to deliver captives, and for this purpose must be gifted, if he be not qualified unto it, he will fail in the execution of it. The Apostle recites the same passage,

ſage, but above all, that place in *Iſaiah* 42. and the 2, 3, 4, 5. verſes, doth manifeſtly cleer this matter, *Behold my ſervant*, ſaith the Lord, *mine elect, in whom my ſoule delighteth, hee ſhall not fail, neither ſhall he be diſcouraged; I will hold him with my right hand, he ſhall not be diſmayed*, (ſaith the Text). Here you ſee in the words, how many expreſſions the Lord uſeth, to ſhew how he qualifieth his Son Chriſt, that ſo he may be fit to manage his buſineſſe.

But further, in the ſecond place, he is not only called Chriſt, but he is Chriſt *Jeſus*, ſaith the Text, and the title doth further illuſtrate the excellency of Chriſts qualifications to be an Advocate; Here is Chriſt Jeſus. *Jeſus*, is a name importing the effectuall prevalency of Chriſt in his plea. I will not ſtand to cleer the ſignification of it by the Etymologie of the word, but for a more ſenſible underſtanding of it, the word is taken up, and examined by the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, in *Mat* 1. verſe 21. when the Angel brings the tidings of his birth, he gave his name, *They ſhall call his name* Jeſus; *for hee ſhall ſave his people from their ſins. Jeſus* is as much as to ſay, a *Saviour* of people from ſin. Now, ſee how admirably our Saviour is qualified: hee hath not only Rethorick & Law at his fingers ends, as we ſay, but he hath an admirable prevalency in his Rethorick. There is not any cauſe

cause that Christ yet took in hand, that miscarried; not any client that ever Christ pleaded for, that at any time was cast, but he that pleads is still the Saviour of his people. This *Jesus* pleads so, that he saves them from their sins. It is admirable to consider; let the sins produced against a person be never so many, never so hainous; let the witnesses come in, and swear never so punctually, and prove never so fully the crimes committed against such a Law; yet such is the faculty of this Advocate with the Father, that he is Jesus, that hee stops the judgement, the sentence cannot goe forth. This Christ as he is *Jesus*, is first the baile of mens persons, till the day of payment. You know the nature of bailing, persons should go to prison presently upon the trespasse, but bail takes men off till judgement be given, or perfect satisfaction be made: As wee have sinned, so in legality wee ought to lie by it presently; but Christ comes before hand, even the Advocate, and passeth his word for these persons, that there shall be currant payment in due time, binding himself body for body, that there shall be appearance at the day; but that is not all, when the day is come, though most witnesses prove point-blanck the crime objected, and the Law pleads the just desert of the punishment provided in that behalf, yet

yet this Advocate steps in, and payes all the Law can demand: I my self have satisfied the Law on their behalf, saith he, therefore there can be no more asked of them. This you know, that if a man have borrowed an hundred pounds, and he be sued never so violently, and witnesses come in, and prove the debt never so cleerly, yet if a surety comes in, and enters bond for him, yea and payes the debt for him, if he hath been discharged, & hath an acknowledgement of satisfaction made on the behalf of that person, then there is no judgement comes out against that person that borrowed the mony, though the thing be proved. This is the case with our Advocate, he is the Surety of *a better Testament*, and pleading, when matter of fact is proved, and the Law speakes directly against it, and justice pleads for such a penalty to be inflicted; yet then is the Saviour produced that makes currant and full payment. There could not be expected any stopping of the sentence for the client, by pleading for them, but there must first be a satisfying of all: This is the Saviours office, and as a Saviour, so he is the satisfier.

Thirdly, this Advocate is *Jesus Christ the righteous*; and this title imports two things to us, and they are very considerable; and they have either respect unto us, or they have respect

unto

unto God, and both of them shew, how admirably Christ is gifted, how sufficiently he is qualified: For this office of Advocateship, as it hath reference unto us, he is *Christ Jesus the righteous*; as much as to say, the true and faithfull. Faithfulness and righteousness are taken for one and the same thing, for dealing truly with persons. Many a one loseth a good cause for the unfaithfulnesse of his Counsel, they make against their clients for bribes, and play on both sides; they deal not honestly with men, they carry the business in a dilative way, they will not dispatch the suit, they have all the arguments of delay: But this your Advocate, and our Advocate, is the righteous Advocate, the faithfull and true witness, he dealeth ingenuously and uprightly; this one you may trust, and put all things into his hand. Many times men put their whole business into their Counsels hands, to sink or swim. But here is an Advocate that is faithfull, here is no danger of sinking, you may put all into his hands, you need not fear at all, he is the righteous and faithful Christ, the faithfull Advocate. But the principal thing I intended in this righteousness, is that wherein the strength of his argument lieth, that he doth plead in the behalf of his client, that is, the Advocate Christ is so righteous, that this very righteousness of his shall carry the cause on your side, even to a full discharge,

dicharge, even from all ſins whatſoever Beloved, the whole ſecurity of perſons from wrath and Hell, from ſin and death, hangs upon this one hinge of his *righteouſneſſe*. As there is force enough in his righteouſneſſe, ſo the cauſe proſpers on the clients ſide; if that ſhould fail, nothing in the world can uphold the cauſe. It will be therefore of mighty concernment to conſider Firſt, how cleere the Scripture is, that layes all the burthen of the task in pleading upon his righteouſneſſe, and further, to conſider what kind of righteouſneſſe of Chriſt that is, that carries ſuch a ſtrength in Chriſts pleading for his people. Both of them need to be cleered, eſpecially the latter paſſage. For the firſt, the Scriptures will be cleer of themſelves, only the latter paſſage, what kinde of righteouſneſs it is that hath that prevalency, is to be made apparent. A righteouſneſſe, and his righteouſneſſe moſt grant; but ſome miſtake there is in the mindes of ſome people, that reach not the height of the Goſpel, what that righteouſneſs is, that hath ſuch a prevalency. The preſent time will not give me leave to handle it fully; and I will not doe it by halves, and therefore I will leave it to another time.

SERMON

SERMON IV.

1 John 2. verse 1, 2.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, &c.

IN these words, you have the Apostles conclusion, and his Argument to inforce it: his conclusion is, that he would not have them to sin; his argument is, *If any man doe sin,* &c.

The first thing that we have observed out of these words, is this; That it is a powerfull argument to prevaile with persons, such as *John* writes unto, not to sin, to let them know, that though they do sin, yet they have an Advocate with the Father.

We are fallen upon the consideration of the Argument it self.

First,

First, in the matter of it.

Secondly, in the forme of it.

Every Argument hath some firmnesse in it self, from whence is produced some good inference: That which hath not a power in it self, is not able to make good another thing. Concerning the matter of this Argument, you have,

First, the Apostles Supposition.

Secondly, a Provision against that which this Supposition might doe; or, against that which he doth suppose a man might do.

First, I say, here is a Supposition: You may sin, though you be little children. The Provision against the evill that sin might doe, is in the following words. Though we do sin, yet we have an Advocate with the Father. 'And concerning this matter of the Argument' we have these things propos'd considerable:

First, what the office is, that is here ascribed unto Christ, in that he is called Advocate, *We have an Advocate*; and how Christ in Heaven doth exercise this office.

Secondly, what the cause it is that Christ doth plead by vertue of this his office.

Thirdly, how this Advocate is qualified unto this office.

Lastly, the issue and the event of the execution of this office.

Concerning the first; this Advocateship of Christ, is a plea founded, or grounded upon Justice; Christ doth not appeal in his plea to meere mercy, but his client shall stand or fall, as Justice it self shall pronounce a sentence. And, concerning the second clause of this first part, Christ doth exercise this his office in Heaven, rather virtually then vocally: He speaks as his blood doth speak, *We are come to the blood of sprinkling*, saith the Apostle, in the 12th Chapter to the *Hebrews*, *that speaks better things then the blood of* Abel. We came further to consider, whose cause it is that Christ doth maintain and plead.

First, I say, of all Believers, he calls them little children, as well as strong men, even the cause of little children, even when they have sinned without limitation of this sin, they shall commit: For he doth expresse himself in generall terms, it is the cause of those that do sin: *If any man sin.*

Secondly, the cause, not only of present Believers, but also the cause of all the Elect, Believers or unbelievers, if they be elected. It is true, they shall believe in time, but yet, I say, Christ is an Advocate of them, while unbelievers, if they be elected. There is not a sin in the world, but as it is damnable in its own nature, in the rigour of justice, so it doth not allow of any

any forbearance; it is only Christ that makes the forbearance, evun untill they are called. Then we came to consider how Christ our Advocate is qualified to manage this office with that efficaciousnes and succesſe to the comfort of thoſe whoſe cauſe he doth maintain. The qualifications of Christ are expreſſed in three things in the Text.

Firſt, for the title, he is anointed to be an Advocate, he hath a lawfull call to the Bar; nay, he is priviledged, there is none to plead but himſelf.

Secondly, it is *Chriſt, anointed*, that is, gifted, and made an able Miniſter: in the 42. of *Iſaiah*, and the beginning of the Chapter: in the 1. *v.* the Lord tells us, how he ſhall not be diſmayed, he will hold him up, and, ſaith the Text, *There the Iſles ſhall wait for his Law*; we muſt underſtand it two wayes: *The Iſles ſhall wait for his Law*, that is, the Iſles ſhall now be directed and guided by him as their Law-giver: or, we may underſtand it thus, he ſhall be ſo good a Lawyer, that the Iſles ſhall waite for his Law, as much as to ſay: If a man have a cauſe to be tried, he heares of a good Counſell, and a Lawyer very expert in the Law, ſuch a man waits for ſuch a mans Law, he waits for the Law out of his mouth, he hopes he will plead his cauſe ſo well, that it ſhal go well with him.

God makes Christ so good a Lawyer, that when he comes to plead his Law, he shall carry the sentence on his clients side.

Secondly, he is *Jesus*, saith the Text, and in that is imported a double qualification of Christ, to exercise his office of Advocateship, *Jesus*, as much as a Saviour; and it shews the efficacie of his plea, he pleads the cause of his clients so strongly, that he saves.

Thirdly, the qualifications of Christ unto his Advocateship, as imported in the third title, he is *Jesus Christ the righteous*, saith the Text, He is Jesus Christ the righteous, in a double sense, and in both of them is declared the excellent qualifications of Christ to Advocate for us.

First, he is *Jesus Christ the righteous*, that is, the faithfull, a Counsellor that will deal truly with his client; A Counsell that will deal uprightly, a Counsel that will not fail.

Secondly, this Advocate is *Jesus Christ the righteous*, that is, Christ who hath such a righteousnesse, as that the whole strength of his plea, the force of his Argument that he doth urge in his plea, yeth a together in his righteousnesse. The former expression imports what Christ himself is, this imports what his Argument is. I say, the only argument that hath the carrying power, to leade the cause, to state the conclu-

onclusion for the client, the only force of the argument lies in the righteousnesse of Christ; this is that which God looks upon; this is that which prevails with God himself; this is that which makes it a righteous thing with God to forgive and to [illegible] I say, his righteousness, this is the [illegible] which the whole [illegible], the [illegible] which all our safety [illegible], [illegible] that keeps us from [illegible] nothing else could be [illegible]; And therefore, of all things in the world, [illegible] should be more searched into and understood, then this one truth; namely, that it is the righteousnesse of Christ that prevailes in plea with God for a person that doth sin, and this righteousnesse of Christ only. I shall therefore endeavour for the cleering up of this thing; that the strength of Christs plea with God, doth lie in his righteousnesse. Herein I shall endeavour to shew you,

First, evidently out of Scripture, that it is this righteousnesse of his, and only this righteousnesse of his, that prevails with God for the discharge of a member of Christ when he doth sin.

Secondly, we shall consider what this righteousness is that doth so prevail with him.

First, I say, the Scripture, or rather the Holy Ghost, in the word of Grace, holds forth this

truth frequently unto us, that all the strength of the plea with God, and consequently all the ground of solid comfort unto us, doth wholy depend upon the righteousnes of Christ and nothing else: Look into *Psal.* 50. 5. & 6. verses; for *David* even in his time, was marvellous cleer in this truth: *Gather my Saints*, saith the Lord in that Psalm, *such as have made a covenant with me by sacrifice, and the heavens shall declare his righteousnesse.* Gather them together, that is, bring them to judgement, such as have made a covenant with me by sacrifice, and then when they stand in Judgement, *The heavens shall declare his righteousnesse.* The Text doth not say, *the heavens shall declare* my *righteousnesse*, though that also is a truth, that the heavens do declare both Gods and Christs righteousnesse: Gods in passing sentence of absolution, Christs pleading so for this sentence that God in justice cannot but passe, the sentence: *The heavens shall declare his righteousnes*, saith the Text. Either understand it thus, the righteousnesse that shall be pleaded, is the righteousnes that comes down from heaven, of which wee shall speak more hereafter: or thus, the righteousnesse which Christ shall plead, shall be so cleer and evident in the prevalency of it, that the Sun in the Firmament, the Sun in Heaven hath not a cleerer brightnesse in it, then this righteous-

righteouſneſſe ſhall have to cleer up the buſineſs: Gather my Saints together *that have made a covenant with me by ſacrifice*, ſaith the Text. What ſacrifice, will you ſay, or what is there in ſacrifice, that the Lord ſhould be in covenant with his people? Look into the 51. *Pſalme*, and *verſe* 19. you ſhall there ſee what there is in ſacrifice that makes a covenant between God and his people: *Then ſhalt thou be pleaſed*, ſaith *David*, *with the ſacrifice of righteouſneſſe*; righteouſneſſe in the ſacrifice, is that which doth procure a pleaſedneſs in God unto thoſe perſons, unto whom ſacrifice doth belong, or for whoſe uſe ſacrifice doth ſerve; I ſay, righteouſneſſe in the ſacrifice, not an inherent righteouſneſſe in the typicall ſacrifice it ſelf: For, ſaith the Apoſtle, it is impoſſible that the *blood of Buls and Goats ſhould take away ſin.* But there is a righteouſntſſe that is declared from Heaven, and annexed to the ſacrifice, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, this is that which puts an end to the quarrel, this is that which makes an agreement between thoſe that are at difference: And in the 51. *Pſalme*, and the 14. *verſe*, you ſhall ſee, beloved, *David* hath ſuch a confidence in the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, and doth ſo make it his refuge, as that in the greateſt of ſins as he was ever overtaken with, he betakes himſelf unto that, *Deliver me, O Lord, from*

blood-guiltinesse; and there you shall finde he doth expresse himself thus; namely, *The God of my righteousnesse*; there you shall plainly see deliverance from blood-guiltinesse, is ascribed unto the righteousnesse of God; and he waits for his deliverance, even out of the power which that righteousnesse hath with God: For that purpose in the 71. *Psalme*, and the 2. *vers.* and in the 19. *verse.* or there about. First, you shall see *David* here makes the righteousnesse of Christ his refuge in extremity, *Deliver me O Lord in thy righteousnesse*; and afterwards you shall see how he sticks to this righteousnesse for refuge still, and will not leave it: *My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousnes*: And *I will make mention of thy righteousnesse, and thine only*, saith the Text there, *v.* 16 Mark the expression well, let *David* be in what condition he will, he will make no other plea in the world, but this, *I will make mention of thy rigteousnesse, and thine only.* Whether you will understand it of Gods righteousnesse simply, as Judge, or of Christs righteousnesse, as he is the Advocate, they come all to one reckoning: For, if God do deliver in a righteous sentence, or according to righteousnesse, deliverance doth proceed from righteousnesse pleaded. So that, I say, if you understand it of the Lord, then you must conceive the righteousnesse of Christ is the

the ground, why God pronounceth a ſentence of righteouſneſſe: And in the 143: *Pſalme*, and the 11. *verſe*, you ſhall ſee *David* doth there againe aſcribe his deliverance unto righteouſneſs ſtill: *Quicken thou mee, O Lord, for thy names ſake; and for thy righteouſneſſe ſake*, ſaith he, *bring my ſoule out of trouble.* The Prophet *Iſaiah* comes behind none in Evangelicall ſweet truths for the comfort of Gods people, he is marvelous full concerning this thing; namely, the inchange of the people of God by the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt. Look into *Iſaiah*, Chap. 1. *verſe* 27. *Sion*, ſaith the Lord there, *ſhall be redeemed with judgement*, &c. *and the converts with righteouſneſſe*: Here you ſee, beloved, that the Church of God ſhal be brought to judgement. Judgement, you know, is a ſentence paſſed by a Judge; and there ſhall be redemption unto *Sion*, even by judgement; and this ſentence of a Judge muſt be pronounced, for the deliverance of the client: This is our comfort, we ſhall be ſaved by righteouſneſſe, ſaith the Text. In *Iſaiah* 41. you ſhall ſee how the Lord ſets out Chriſt in this very term, *Who hath raiſed up the righteous man*, ſaith the Text, in *verſ.* 2. *and hath ſet him at his feet? I the firſt and the laſt*, ſaith the Lord, in *ver* 4. Chriſt, I ſay, is held forth unto men, as the righteous man raiſed up for the good of the ſons of men.

In

In the 51. of *Isaiah*, the Holy Ghost tells us, about the 5. & 6. *verses*, that God will make *judgement to rest as a light upon the people*, that is, when the Lord brings his people unto judgement, it shal be a lightsome day unto them, and though a lightsome day, yet who can stand before his Judgement? Mark the ground of the lightsomnes of the day, when they shall come unto their trial; *My righteousnes is neer*, saith the Lord, *my judgement is gone forth*, *my salvation is gone forth*; therefore it should be a lightsome day, because there shall be righteousnes in that day to plead out that judgement that shall be given on the behalf of the clients of Christ: In *Isaiah* 53. *verse* 11. *He shall see of the travel of his soul, and he shall be satisfied*; that is, God shall see the travell of the soul of Christ, and God shall be satisfied. But how comes it to passe, that God is pacified by beholding the righteousnesse, the travel of the soul of Christ? *By his knowledge*, saith the next words, *shal my righteous servant justifie many*. There is a great deal of difference to understand the meaning of the phrase *righteous servant*; *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justifie many*. For my own part, I think, the plain sense doth carry much light in it, as much as to say, Christ knows so much concerning the prevalency of his own righteousnesse, that he pleads so with the Father by

by it, that he shall be sure to carry the cause in the behalf of his client, when he pleads it; he knows so much, I say, of the prevalency of his righteousnesse, that he is sure he shall carry the cause for their justification, when they come to their triall. In the 59. of *Isaiah*, and 16. *verse*, you have an excellent expression; there the Lord, saith the Text, wondered that there were none, that he could finde never an *Intercessor*, therefore, as it follows, *my arm hath brought salvation.* But how doth his arm bring salvation? *my righteousnesse*, so it follows, *it sustained me.* Observe it well, there is none in the world to deal with God on the behalf of men, but the Son of God, Christ himself, there could not one come in to help him. There is a mighty charge laid against poor Believers, containing such a bulk of transgressions, with so many aggravations, that Christ himself had sunk under them, being alone, had not his righteousnesse sustained him; this was that which held him up in the whole plea, till the sentence was given, on the behalf of his clients; *for he put on righteousnesse as a brest-plate*, In the 51. of *Ieremiah*, and the 5. & 6. *verses* of that Chapter: *Behold, the dayes come:* or, *In those dayes I will raise up a righteous branch unto* David; *In those dayes* Judah *shall be saved, and* Israel *shall dwell safely, and the name wherewith he*

he shall be called, is, The Lord our righteousnesse. Here is a righteous branch raised up, this follows next, *they shall be saved.* How so? In that there is a righteous branch that is to plead for it. *Israel* shall dwell safely, that by *Judah* shall be saved, in the world and from the world; but in that there is a righteous branch raised up. *Judah* shall be saved from the wrath of God himself, that wrath shall not break out upon *Judah* when the righteous branch is raised up. God himself shall not cast *Judah* out of [illegible] not only *Judah* in the [illegible] also *Judah* & *Jerusalem*, in the spiritual sense; God [illegible] shall not cast out *Israel*, because this righteous branch is raised up, which shall in righteousnesse establish *Judah* to dwell safely. And the reason of all this is notably rendered, namely, in that this righteousness is become our righteousness, and he is so become our righteousness, that his very name is, *The Lord our righteousness.* It is very well worth your observation, how still the last refuge is fastened upon this righteousnesse of Christ. In the 9. of *Daniel*, and the 24. verse, *Yet seventy weeks are determined unto thy holy City*; to what purpose? *to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousnesse.* Mark it well; this sealing up of the Vision, that is, the establishment of the forgivenesse of sins, and the finishing

nishing of transgression; I say this sealing up follows after the bringing in of everlasting righteousnesse, and this everlasting righteousnesse is the righteousnesse of Christ. Therefore in the 4. of *Malachi* and the 2. verse, you shall find, there is healing appropriate unto Christ, and there you shall finde where the vertue lies, that Christ hath such a healing: *Unto them*, saith the Text, *that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousnesse arise with healing in his wings*; therefore a healing Sun, because he is the Sun of righteousnesse; and the vertue in the wing of Christ to heale, is the *righteousnesse of Christ*. I have been more copious in these passages of Scripture, before the coming of Christ, that people may not think, that to depend only and wholly upon the righteousnesse of Christ for security and comfort, is a new thing, but was known, and was a refuge from the beginning. The Apostle Paul speaks more clearly then any of the rest, I shall instance but in two passages, for the truth is, all the Epistles of the Apostles are full of this thing: The strength of the plea of Christ in the behalf of his people sinning doth stand in his righteousnesse: For this purpose, look into the 3. Chapter to the *Romans*, in the beginning of which Chap. you shall see how mightily the Apostle pleads to the convincing of all the world of sin, and the fruit

of

of that sinfulnesse, you shall finde from the 13. verse forwards, a description of the sins of men. In the 20. verse he makes a conclusion: *Therefore by the deeds of the Law shal no flesh be justified in his sight.* Now, after he had taken off all that might possibly be in man towards his remedy, and refuge, all that possible might be in the Law for the people to rest in, he begins to establish the foundation, upon which the safety & deliverance, and security of Gods people, doth indeed depend: But now, saith the Apostle in v. 21. *The righteousnesse of God without the Law, is manifest, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. even the righteousnesse of God, which is by faith in Iesus Christ unto all, and upon all that doe believe; for there is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his Grace, through the redemption that is in Iesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousnesse for the remission of sins, to declare his righteousnesse at this time, that he might be just, and the justifier of those that doe believe in Iesus.* You see here is an inculcating again and again, that it is a righteousnesse; namely, his righteousnesse, which God hath set forth to be a propitiation, that is, the righteousnesse of Christ, to declare his righteousnesse, saith the Apostle, *upon all*, imports unto us the sole refuge for

for the remission of sins, is only the righteousnesse of Christ: Look also into the 5. of the *Romans* 18. & 19. verses, *As by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous* Our transgressions are the issue which *Adams* disobedience brought forth, that obedience of one man is our security, and deliverance from Hell, and death, which one mans disobedience brought into the world; all of it is frustrated and evacuated by the obedience of one, and by the righteousnesse of that one: Nothing but the obedience and righteousnesse of Christ setting persons free from the fruits of unrighteousnesse and disobedience in *Adam*, is able to make them righteous. I hope, by this time, the truth is cleered enough, that there is nothing to be mentioned but only his righteousnes, nothing can hold water, nothing can hold plea but this righteousnesse of Christ. You shall therefore consider out of all these passages what that righteousnesse is that hath efficacy and prevalency with the Father, for the discharge of a member of Christ when he sins.

First, you shall see this negatively.

Secondly, positively; and therein we shall endeavour to declare what righteousnesse of Christ that is that doth relieve us.

First, negatively; there is not any righteousnesse

nesse of a Believer which he acts, which can possibly have any force in plea with the Father for the discharge of a person that hath committed a sin; I say, no righteousnesse of a Believer which he acts, and I mention that righteousnesse which he doth act, because the very righteousnesse of Christ it self, is indeed the righteousnesse of a Believer: For, he is our righteousnesse, *The Lord our righteousnesse*, as you have heard. As he was made sin for us, and became our sin by imputation, so we are made the righteousnesse of God in him, that is, Christs righteousnesse is as much become our own righteousnesse, as our sins became Christs sins: And as Christ bare the whole guilt of our sins, by being made sin for us; so we enjoy the whole fruit of Christs righteousnesse by being made righteous in him; therefore I say not simply no righteousnesse of a Believer, but no righteousnesse of a Believer which himself doth act, hath the least force in plea to prevaile for the discharge of sin. I must tell you, there is no divine Rethoricke, there is no omnipotent excellency in any righteousnesse whatsoever, which a Believer can put up unto God. It is not your turning from your evill wayes, it is not your repentance, though never so cordiall and large; it is not your departing from iniquity, it is not your doing good hath the least force

force or power of plea with the Father to prevail with him for your righteouſneſſe, for your diſcharge, or to move him to give the ſentence upon you, that you are diſcharged. No righteouſneſſe, I ſay, whatſoever you can doe: For the beſt righteouſneſſe that ever man did performe, Chriſt only excepted, hath more in it to make againſt the perſon that did it, then it hath to make for him to obtain a ſentence of diſcharge; and my reaſon is this: In the beſt righteouſneſſe of man, in turning from ſin, or in repenting or mourning, or what ever elſe there is to be thought of, there is abundance of ſin, even in the very beſt actions that are performed. And where there is ſinfulneſſe, there is a plea againſt the perſon; ſo that if you bring that righteouſneſſe to plead with God, to prevail with him, you bring that which may be objected againſt you, and may prove a ſtrong plea to mar the cauſe that is in hand. I beſeech you, beloved, obſerve the Apoſtle in the 7th Chapter to the *Romans*, where, I think, I ſhall meet with theſe things, which moſt people in ignorance do moſt commonly make their chiefeſt plea, whereon they build their own comforts, and their whole comforts, as if all were well between God and them thereby; yet you ſhall their finde, how the Apoſtle, though qualified in that manner, as he was, doth both

renounce any such plea, and also doth betake himself to that plea we are now in hand with: The Apostle saith there expressly, *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I finde not: I delight in the Law of God, in the inner man, but in the mean while, there is a law in my members, rebelling against the law of my minde, and leading me captive to the law of sin*; out of all which principles, observe, I beseech you, these particulars:

First, the Apostle, though he did see he fell through infirmitie, yet he cleerly perceived his heart was upright towards God; so that he said, *To will is present with me, the good that I would doe, that doe I not; and the evill that I would not doe, that do I.* Though the Apostle was overtaken, yet his heart was towards God still: when he did evill, his heart said plainly, It is not with my consent; when he could not do good, his heart told him, it was for lack of power, and not because he did not desire it. Now, come to persons that walk exactly, as the Apostle did, they are overtaken with a sin; what is there comfort when they do sin? though I be overtaken, the frame of my heart is right still, my heart is sincere towards God, my heart is right, it is directly contrary to my disposition, I do not do that evill I do with a full bent of my spirit; and in regard my heart is thus right,

there

there is comfort to me, though I have ſinned: Suppoſe your ſpirits were in that frame the Apoſtles was in at that time, I ask but this, Do you not draw comfort ſtill from the plea of this diſpoſition your ſpirits do make? When you have committed a ſin, do you not fetch comfort from thence? Ask your hearts, and they will anſwer, yea, we have done ſo, and we may do ſo. I beſeech you conſider it well, when the Apoſtle had argued the caſe thus, what was the finall concluſion, and the ſole refuge that he doth flie unto, or the plea that he would truſt unto for his deliverance and comfort? He doth not ſay in the concluſion, *I thank God, to will is preſent with me*, I thank God, my heart is in a good frame and temper, though I was overtaken; I ſay, *Paul* doth not make uſe of this plea, but he betakes himſelf to this, *I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt; and there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt; and it is the law of the Spirit of life that is in Chriſt hath freed me from the law of ſinne and death.* So that the whole refuge of the Apoſtle, was not any inward diſpoſition, as if he could plead out comfort unto himſelfe there-from; but the plea was without himſelfe, even in Chriſt, and therefore he gives thanks unto Chriſt for deliverance: So in the 2. Chapter to the *Philippians*, you ſhall heare the Apoſtle,

towards the beginning of the Chapter, pleading the same thing there, as he did here; namely, that it is not any righteousnesse that he can reach unto, that he dare venture the plea upon, or his own comfort upon: First, he tells us, that *touching the righteousnesse of the Law, he was blameless*. This was before his conversion, you will say? It is true; but after his conversion, he tells us also of a righteousnes he had then: But beloved, doth *Paul* put out his own righteousnesse to plead for him? Doth he expect his comfort, or the Answer of Heaven for discharge upon the plea of that righteousnesse of his? Nothing lesse; for, saith the Apostle there *I account all things but losse and dung, that I may be found in him; not having mine own righteousnesse which is of the Law, but the righteousnesse of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ*. Surely, beloved, if the Apostle had reckoned that his righteousnes could have had any force in plea, he would never have rejected it as dung: That man that thinketh he hath strength in an argument, will not fling that argument away, and not make mention of it for the triall of his cause, if he thought there were any power in it. But this the Apostle did, hee accounted his righteousnesse dung, even the righteousnesse of his, after he was converted; and in that regard, he durst not be found in that, but only in

in the righteouſneſs of God, which is by faith in Chriſt. He doth not ſimply ſay, he would not be found in the righteouſneſs of the Law, but exclusively alſo; he would not be found in his own righteouſneſſe; ſo that he puts out his own righteouſneſſe quite, he ſhall no plea at all go along through his own righteouſneſſe: The righteouſneſs of Chriſt ſhall ſpeak for his plea, or elſe he would look for no good iſſue at all; this, beloved, is the way.

Let me give one touch by way of application; you may eaſily perceive, how mightily people are miſtaken, and therefore no marvell they do live ſo uncomfortably; no marvell they are in fear of death, and thereby in bondage all their life long, while they run for the refreſhment of their ſpirits to their own righteouſneſſe, to the plea of their own works; and will have their hearts eaſed upon that righteouſneſſe that they themſelves do, whereas nothing gets a gracious diſcharge from their Father, but only Chriſt, and his righteouſneſſe. Therefore, beloved, how ever it may go with ſome for a harſh thing, to take men off from their own righteouſneſſe, in reſpect of ſpeaking comfort unto them, and to lead them to the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt revealed in the Goſpel, as that from which they may draw all their comfort, though this may ſound harſh to ſome

people, that have not been trained up in the way of the grace of God, and in the freeneſſe, of it revealed in the Goſpel; yet I doubt not but in time, the Lord will be pleaſed to reveale to us, that running to Chriſt out of our ſelves, and diſclaiming of our owne righteouſneſſe, and ſeeking of comfort from it; that leaving our own actions, and all that can be imagined to be in us, or can be done by us, will be the thing that in the end will eſtabliſh our hearts and ſpirits, yea, and fill them with joy and peace in believeing.

It remains, that we ſhould further conſider one thing, that I know ſtarles ſome perſons, or at leaſt lays blocks in their way, before I can poſſibly come unto the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt it ſelf, that makes up the ſtrength of plea with God for poor creatures.

Object. Some will object, Though all that we do of our own will not hold; yea, yet there is a righteouſneſſe of faith, will ſome ſay, and that pleads with the Father, and that gets the diſcharge of ſin from the Father; Beloved, there is ſome diſpute about this point, and I ſhall not deſire to enter into it; I ſhall onely in a few things, endeavour to cleer up the truth as cleer as poſſibly I may, that I may goe on.

Anſw. I anſwer in generall, ſo far forth as the

the righteousnes of faith is the righteousnes of Christ, there is strength in the plea of that righteousnes, but the righteousnes of faith must be considered meerly & only, as it is Christ alone, and not as it is any righteousnesse of faith it self, as I may so speak: If any strength of faith be bronght in, as concurrent to that righteousnesse that pleads out the discharge of a sinner, over and above what is simply and only Christs own righteousnesse; I say, that is no righteousnesse to be pleaded, nor hath power, nor force in plea at all. I shall give two or three passages by way of hint: It is true, the Apostle in the 10. to the *Romans* tells us, *The righteousnesse of faith speaks on this wise*; importing a righteousnesse of faith, which indeed before was called the righteousnesse of God himself, they submitted not themselves to the righteousnesse of God; but, beloved, I take it the righteousnesse here, is called the righteousnesse of faith, as faith is the hand that doth close with the righteousnesse of God; not as if this righteousnesse were properly faith, but meerly objective, as we say, Faith, as it lays hold upon that righteousnesse which is onely Christ the object thereof, in 1. *Rom.* verse 16. the Apostle saith there, *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth.*

Mark it well, here is the power of God to salvation revealed. In what is the power of God to salvation? It is in it, saith the Apostle, that is, in the Gospel, of which hee was not ashamed; so it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth, but the power of God to salvation is not in believing, but, in it, that is, in the Gospel. And what is the Gospel of Christ there? Certainly, the Gospel of Christ there, is not faith, but the object of it: For it is said to be reveled from faith to faith. But, if you looke into the 2. of *Luke*, and the 10. verse, there you shall see plainly, what the Gospel of Christ is: An Angel came from Heaven to the Shepherds, and speaks thus: *Behold, I bring you glad tidings*, that is, I Evangelize, so the word is in the originall; I bring you glad tidings *of exceeding great joy*; *for unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour, that is Christ the Lord.* The word Gospel in the *Romans*, is the very same word drawn from the same theame with that in the 2. of *Luke*, verse 10. It is as much as to say, the Gospel is glad tidings of great joy, and what are these glad tidings? *A Saviour is born unto you.* So Christ a Saviour born to men, is the Gospel; and saith the Apostle, *I am not ashamed of it*, that is, I am not ashamed of Christ borne a Saviour, for this reason; Christ is the power of

of God to ſalvation, to every one that believeth. In the 1. of *Peter*, and the 1. Chapter the Apoſtle tells us, *Wee are kept by the power of God through faith, unto ſalvation*; where it is plainly imported, that faith unto ſalvation is the thorrow-fare, it is but a meer chanell, through which the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt doth run, not communicating any righteouſneſſe it ſelf, by which a perſon may ſtand righteous before God, or have diſcharge by the Lord, or from the Lord. This I would fain know, beloved, in every act, or in any act of believing, is the act of believing abſolutely perfect, and compleat in all things, without any defect at all, or weakneſſe? Or, Is there ſome imperfection? There is ſome imperfection you muſt ſay. If then there be imperfection, this I would fain know, how that thing that hath imperfection, that hath unrighteouſneſſe in it ſelf, can conſtitute a perſon by it ſelf righteous; Can *Faith* chargeable with unrighteouſneſſe, make a perſon unrighteous in himſelf, ſtand righteous before God? The Apoſtle in the 7. to the *Hebrews*, telling us of Chriſt, ſaith, *It behoveth us to have ſuch an high Prieſt, harmleſſe, holy, undefiled, and ſeparate from ſinners*; if Chriſt himſelf had had ſinfulneſſe with his righteouſneſſe, that very righteouſneſſe of Chriſt it ſelf would not have ſerved

ved the sturn ; and therefore it behoved him to be holy, harmlesse, and undefiled, and without offence. Beloved, Christ himself could not constitute us righteous before the Father if he himself had not been holy, and without sin; and can it be imagined, that faith that hath unrighteousnesse in it self can make us righteous? This is the summe of that I shall speake at this time. I hope, the things that I have spoken will not be offensive to any ; for I desire freely that this, and all that I have, or shall deliver unto you, may be received as they agree with the light of the Gospel, that is to be the rule to measure all truths by, and the rest that remains I shall come to the next day.

SERMON

SERMON VII.

1 John 2. verſ. 1, 2.

My little children, theſe things I write unto you, that you ſin not: And if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins.

WE have obſerved already: Firſt, from the connexion of both verſes together (the latter containing an Argument in it, to inforce a charge in the former) *That the making known of this diſcharge from ſin, before ſin be committed, is ſo far from opening a gap unto licentiouſneſs, that it is one of the beſt means in the world to reſtrain men from licentiouſneſſe.*

Secondly, we came to conſider the Argument, and in the Argument, the matter of it and

and the force of it. The Argument that prevails with men not to sin, is: *That if any man sin, he hath an Advocate with the Father.*

Wee have considered what this Advocateship is, and that it is a plea, grounded upon Justice: We have further considered for whose cause it is.

First, it is the cause of Believers, and the cause of Believers when they sin; and not only the cause of present Believers, but of the Elect, although not yet Believers, which yet in time shall be such.

We came also to consider, how Christ this Advocate is qualified unto this office of Advocateship.

The qualifications of Christ are intimated in the three titles here attributed unto him.

First, he is *Christ*: that imports,
1. A lawfull call to plead.
2. A sufficient furnishing him with skill to plead.

Secondly, he is *Jesus* importing the efficaciousnesse of his plea: He pleads so well, that he saves his people from their sins, he carries the cause.

Thirdly, Christs qualification to his office of Advocateship, is imported in that attribute of *Righteousnesse*: *Jesus Christ the righteous*, and that

that contains in it, the strength of his plea whereby he doth attain to the salvation of those persons whose cause he doth plead. Concerning this last attribute we have observed, that the righteousnesse of Christ contains in it the strength of Christs plea, as Advocate whereby he doth become the propitiation for the sins of his clients; I say, the strength of his plea lies in this, that he is *Jesus Christ the righteous*; we have therefore proposed to be considered,

First, how cleer the Scripture is in this truth, that it is his righteousnesse that carries the cause of a poor Believer when he hath sinned, and gets the discharge for his sin, after it is committed; I say, the plea lies in his righteousnesse. I cannot insist upon the Scriptures mentioned, they are very plentifull.

We came further, to consider what this righteousnesse of his is, that hath such a strength of plea in it; the resolution of this I distributed into two heads:

First, Negative,

Secondly, Affirmative.

First, the righteousnesse which carries away the cause, and obtains the discharge of a Believers sin, is no righteousnesse of our own, no, not so much as the righteousnesse of faith, as it is our act of believing. Here we left the last day.

I will give you a touch of the impossibility that faith should so plead for the discharge from sin in its own name or strength, as to carry away the cause on the side of this person sinning. It is true, the Apostle speaks of the righteousnesse of faith in the 10. to the *Romans*, about the 4. verse. A righteousnesse of faith there is indeed, but that righteousnesse which is here given and ascribed unto faith, is afterwards appropriated to the Word, that is, unto the Gospel, that is the righteousnesse of faith speaks on this wise; say not in thine heart, *who shall ascend up into Heaven? that is to bring Christ from thence*; or, *who shall descend into the deep?* But what saith it? *The Word is nigh thee in thy heart, & in thy mouth.* That is, in the word, in the heart, and in the mouth, that is, the word of Faith, and so not, the righteousnesse of a mans own act of believing I cannot dwell upon what I have delivered before.

There are some things briefly to be considered, even about our believing, as it hath a stroke in the discharge from sin, or in the pardon of sin. The truth is, beloved, some hand faith hath in this businesse; but it is not any righteousnesse in the act of believing that carries any stroke in it. If you will consider it well, you shall easily see, there is no more righteousnesse in our believing, as we do act believing, then there

there is in any other gracious act whatſoever we do; there is no more righteouſneſſe in the act of our beleving, then is in our love of God: nay more, there is as much ſinfulneſſe in our act of believing, as in our acting of other gifts. There is no man under Heaven hath attained unto that height of believing, or that ſtrength of faith, but there is ſtill ſomething wanting, ſome imperfection and ſinfulneſſe in it: And as there is weakneſſe and imperfection in believing; ſo it is not poſſible that this believing ſhould give forth ſuch a righteouſneſſe, as to conſtitute a perſon who is unrighteous in himſelf, to be righteous before God. That which cannot ſet it ſelf compleat and righteous before God, can never ſet another righteous before God, Faith muſt be firſt juſt it ſelf, or elſe it is not poſſible it ſhould be imagined it can ever by the righteouſneſſe of its own act juſtifie another. Beloved, what ever the Scriptures ſpeak concerning faith juſtifying, it muſt of neceſſity be underſtood objectively, or declaratively, one of theſe two wayes: Either faith is ſaid to be our righteouſneſſe, in reſpect of Chriſt onely, who is believed on, and ſo it is not the righteouſneſſe of his own act of believing, but the righteouſneſſe of him that is apprehended by that act of believing: Or, elſe you muſt underſtand it declaratively, that is, whereas all our righteouſ-

righteousnesse, and all our discharge from sin, flowing only from the righteousnesse of Christ alone, is an hidden thing; that which in it self is hid to men, doth become evident by believing. And as faith doth make the righteousnesse of Christ evident to the Believer; so it is said to justifie by its own act declaratively, and no otherwise. And whereas in the 5. Chapter to the *Romans*, and the 1. verse, the Apostle there saith, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God.* In *Rom.*8. vers. 33. the Apostle saith, *It is God that justifieth.* Now, I beseech you compare these Texts together, then tell mee whether the act of believing, except it hath reference to the object, which is Christ, of it self doth justifie. whether or no these two places cā possibly be reconciled without contradiction. It is God that justifieth, and it is Faith that justifieth; Faith is not God, neither is God Faith. If therefore it be faith in justification, in respect of its own act that justifieth, it is not God that justifieth us; and if it be God that justifieth, then it is not Faith in respect of its own act. How will you reconcile it? When therefore the holy Ghost speaks of faith justifying, it speaks of faith as laying hold upon God for our justification, and therefore though faith doth here appeare as that which doth lay hold upon the righteousnesse of God, yet faith here cannot be said

said to be that righteousnesse that doth justifie us.

Ob. But I know some will be ready to say, it is not to be understood, as if faith had any innate power of its owne to procure the discharge or pardon from sin; but faith is to bee understood as the Instrumentall cause, that laies hold upon that justification, and so it goes before the justification of a person, and it is to be understood no otherwise.

Answ. I shall desire to keep in the plain path for the cleering up of this truth, and so far as possible may be, I abhor to walk in the clouds, in a truth that so highly concerns the comfort and establishing the consciences and spirits of men; and therefore, I say, that faith, as it layes hold upon the righteousnesse of Christ, it doth not bring this righteousnesse of Christ to the soul, but only doth declare the presence of this righteousnesse in the soul that was there, even before faith was. I beseech you mark me wel, I know, beloved, I have many very catching ears about me; I speak it the rather, that there may be the more warines, because there are frequent mis-understandings & mistakings of the things I deliver, especially by those that come to catch I say again, there is no person under Heaven, reconciled unto God, justified by God, through the righteousnesse of Christ, but this person is

juſtified and reconciled unto God before hee doth believe. And therefore faith is not the inſtrument radically to unite Chriſt and the ſoul together: but rather is the fruit that follows & flows from Chriſt the root, being united before hand to the perſons that doe believe; ſo that the efficacy and power of believing, is to be inſtrumentall for the declaration of an act that was done before, only it was hid. For the cleering up of this to you, beloved, conſider that expreſſion in the 12. Chapter to the *Hebrews*, verſ. 1. *Faith*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeene.* Faith is the evidence, ſaith the Text, of things not ſeen. The Apoſtle here doth not give any efficacy to faith to procure or bring forth a new thing, but he gives to faith only an evidencing power, and that not to evidence any new thing, but to be an evidence of things not ſeen, that is, of things that were before in being, but were hid: but by faith come to be apparent, and ceaſe to be hid, and are manifeſt and open when the evidence of faith doth bring them forth to light: Either you muſt ſay it is not in being till faith is come, and ſo faith doth more then evidence, even beget, and give being to the very thing, or you muſt confeſſe the thing indeed was: but faith makes it evident that before was hid and obſcure. Now,

though

though faith be honoured with the greateſt buſineſſe of all the gifts of the Spirit of God, yet that Chriſt may not be robbed of that which is peculiar unto him, and properly his own, that is, to give compleat being to our juſtification, that it ſhould be given unto faith it ſelf: I ſay, give me leave to propoſe to you ſome particulars, wherein it is as cleer as the day-light, that it is impoſſible for any perſon under Heaven to believe, till ſuch time as this perſon be firſt united unto Chriſt, and become one with him, and that faith it ſelf being but a fruit that flows from our union with him, is not the uniter that knits Chriſt and a perſon together, I ſhall not need to inſiſt upon that place I have often made mention of in the 16. of *Ezekiel:* But, beloved, when you take this point into conſideration, I beſeech you remember that paſſage in the 8. and 9. verſes. The time when God faſtened his love upon the Church, was the *time of the blood of the Church*; *When I ſaw thee polluted in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, Live.* In verſ. 7. it is three times repeated, *When thou waſt in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, Live*; and in verſ. 8. *Thy time was the time of love*, that is, the time of thy blood that he ſpake of before, this time was the time of love; *And I ſpread my skirt over thee*, ſaith the Text, *and I ſware unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine*; *then*

washed I thee with water; yea, I throughly washed thee from thy blood. Here is first loving and spreading the skirt over the Church, before the Church is washed: here is not first washing, and then loving and spreading the skirt over them; but here is first a spreading of the skirt in blood, and after that comes washing, and throughly washing from blood. If any man do think that this washing is to be understood of sanctification, let them but consider, whether or no there be a through-washing from bloud, a perfect washing from bloud, such a washing from bloud, as that the person so washed, is presently all fair; or, as the Prophet speaks expressly in that Chapter, *compleat in beauty*, that is, perfect, and that through his comeliness put upon this person.

But to go on, consider, I beseech you, beloved, that expression in *Isa.* 43 22, 23. the Lord there is pleased, first, to declare himself concerning his people, in what a condition they were, their condition was this: *Thou hast not called upon me, but thou hast been weary of me: yea, thou hast wearied me with thy sins, and thou hast made me to serve with thy transgressions*, saith the Lord. And mark what follows; *I, even I am hee that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine owne sake, and will not remember thy sins*; Here the people whose sins God blotted out, are not considered as

as believing people, but are conſidered as a people that wearied God with their ſins, and people that made him ſerve with their tranſgreſſions: they are conſidered as a people that had not ſo much as an heart to call upon God, but were quite weary of God, for ſo he doth expreſſe himſelf, concerning this people; and even while he doth conſider them thus, even then, he for his owne ſake blotteth out their tranſgreſſions.

And in the 53. of *Iſaiah*, whereof I ſpake ſo largely heretofore, if you marke well, in the 6. verſe, you ſhall ſee plainly, there is nothing but ſin conſidered in the perſon, whoſe iniquities the Lord laid upon Chriſt: *All wee, like ſheep, have gone aſtray, we have turned every one of us to our own way, and hee hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Here is not a conſideration of people as believing people, as though there muſt be a believing, before there can be a diſcharge from ſin; but there is a conſideration of people before they are believing people, even while they are a people going aſtray, and turning every one to their owne way. But the moſt notable expreſſion of all to this purpoſe, is in the 15. of *John*. I deſire you that you would ſeriouſly conſider the ſtrength of Chriſts plea in that place, about the 4. & 5. ver. you ſee Chriſt comparing himſelf, in the beginning of the

Chapter, saith, *I am the Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman; every branch in me that beareth fruit, my Father purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit: every branch in me that beareth not fruit, is cast forth as a branch, and withereth.* But the main thing that I desire to be observed, is this: *Abide in me, as the branch abideth in the Vine; for, as the branch that abideth not in the Vine, cannot bring forth fruit, no more can yee except yee abide in me.* Out of which passage of Scripture, I shall desire you to observe briefly these particulars, ; wherein, I hope, it will be cleer and plain unto you, that it is impossible a person should believe, till Christ hath united himself to this person. I know, beloved, there is none, or at least I cannot meet with any yet, that will deny, but that faith or believing is a fruit of the branch that groweth upon the Vine, that is, one of the fruits of the Spirit, that are wrought by the Spirit of Christ in those that are Christs: For in the 5th Chapter of the Epistle to the *Galatians*, towards the end of the Chapter, you shall finde the Apostle reckon up the fruits of the Spirit, and he takes up faith for one of those fruits amongst the rest. If therefore believing be a fruit that persons beare by vertue of union to the Vine Christ, then it must needs follow, men must first be in Christ, then believe; For, if persons do believe before they

they are vnited, and their union be by a faith that they do act, then ſurely the branch muſt beare this fruit, before it be in the Vine, before there be union. And, if faith be the uniter, it is preſent before the union be made, and ſo the branch doth bear fruit before it doth abide in the Vine, contrary to Chriſts words: For it is maintained and affirmed, that it is faith that doth make the union, and therefore cannot be a fruit of that union. Beloved, this I would fain know of any perſon, Is faith the gift of Chriſt, or no? Is it Chriſt that workes faith in thoſe that do believe in Chriſt, or no? The Apoſtle in the 12. Chapter to the *Hebrewes*, and the 2. verſe, ſaith expreſly, that Chriſt is the *Author of our faith*. Is Chriſt then the Author of our faith, and yet is that faith the Author of our union unto Chriſt? Can a father beget a childe, and yet this childe beget his own father? Doth Chriſt beget faith in us by vertue of our being united unto him? and ſhall this faith beget that union of which it was but a fruit? From whence ſhall perſons that do believe before they are united unto Chriſt, receive this faith of theirs? They are not yet united unto Chriſt, and therefore it cannot come from him, for we can have nothing of Chriſt but by vertue of union, and then it proceeds not from the Spirit of Chriſt neither, for we partake of

that only by vertue of union with him too From whence should it come then? If you have it not from him by vertue of union, it is not from the Vine that his person is incorporated into already, because there must be union before there can be communion: All communion with Christ, all participating of any thing of Christ, proceeds from the union persons shall have with him; he is the root, & as the branch is incorporated into the body and root, so sap and influence is communicated and floweth out into the branch from the root. But this, you will say, is but a parabolicall expression, and Parables prove nothing.

I answer, whereas Christ is pleased to apply the Parable, his application of the Parable hath as full a proofe in it selfe, as any Scripture whatsoever. Now, in this place you shall finde, that Christ doth make exact application of it himselfe to the purpose we now speake of, as wee finde in these words: *As the branch cannot bring forth fruit, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me: I am the Vine, ye are the branches, &c.* Ye cannot bring forth fruit, except ye abide in the Vine; and doe you abide in the Vine, when you are not united unto Christ? No man can say it. Can you bring forth fruit before you are in the Vine? Can you believe before you are in Christ?

Beloved,

Beloved, it is as great an abſurdity to ſay you can, as to ſay a branch can bring forth fruit without a roote. So that, beloved, you muſt hold this for an undenyable truth, you cannot bring forth fruit, except you abide in the Vine. I can bring many other paſſages for the further proof of this thing, but this will ſuffice. Miſtake me not, I do not any way aim at any derogation to believing, but my deſire is, that believing might have its proper office, and may not encroach upon the office of Chriſt himſelf. It is the Lord himſelf, of his own meer Grace, without reſpect to any thing in the world, in men, that makes him give his Son Chriſt unto perſons, that hee might be the juſtification of them. In the 42. of *Iſaiah*, and the 6. verſe, you ſhall ſee there expreſly, Chriſt is given of the Father, and hee is given as a covenant by the Father, before ever men have eyes to ſee, before ever they have faith to behold Chriſt: *I will give thee for a covenant to the people to open the blind eyes.* He himſelf as the Covenant, and as given, muſt open the blind eyes, or elſe they ſhall never be opened. Wee muſt not have our eyes opened, and then have Chriſt given to us, but Chriſt is firſt given, and then our eyes are opened: We muſt not believe, that ſo we may be in covenant with Chriſt: but wee muſt firſt be in covenant with him, and then believing

that

that must follow as the fruite of the covenant. If wee have faith before wee bee united unto Christ, if our eyes be opened before Christ be given to be the covenant, then Christ is anticipated and prevented: For, whereas he comes of purpose to open the blind eyes, and is given for this very thing, to open the blind eyes, the eyes are opened already, and this work is done before he comes; and so his coming, and the end thereof, is made frustrate, & in vain in that respect. In briefe, suppose that our faith doth act towards the discharge of our transgressions, then it must follow, it is not only the righteousnesse of Christ that pleads by way of Advocateship with the Father for this discharge. If thou come to the Lord, & plead out that for thy self by vertue of thy faith, which his righteousnesse alone was appointed for to do, and dost not wholly cast thy self upon that, as that which will bear thee out in all thy approaches to God; but joyn thy faith withall in the manner I have spoken, and say in thy heart, I believe, and in that plead thy discharge; if you put this into your plea for the discharge of sin, Christ only is not your sole Advocate, but your faith also doth concur with Christ in this office of Advocateship, and so you make it your Saviour, then which, what can be more dishonourable and more derogatory unto this glorious

office

office of his? For if wee muſt believe before God will juſtifie us, then the ſimple and only plea of Chriſts righteouſneſs alone is not all-ſufficient for God to pardon or to diſcharge ſin: For, ſuppoſe I have not yet believed, now the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, it ſeems, hath not ſtrength enough, till my believeing come in, and joyn with that righteouſneſs: But it is only the righteouſneſs of Chriſt that pleads out the juſtification of a perſon, and not the concurrence of our believing that pleads it out; our believing, I confeſſe, gives comfortable teſtimony that God hath freely juſtified perſons, in and through the alone righteouſneſs of his Son Chriſt, our believing doth conduce to the declaration and manifeſtation of that which God for Chriſts righteouſneſs ſake did doe. By faith wee have evidence of this thing, but it is not our believing that works the thing it ſelf. Now, it remains we goe on, and conſider further affirmatively, what this righteouſnes of his is, that carries the whole ſtrength of the plea, for the diſcharge of the people of God from their ſins which they have committed; I ſay, it is his righteouſneſs, and his alone. Now, this righteouſneſs is to be conſidered in the quality, quantity, and nature of it: concerning the quality and quantity of it in brief; that righteouſneſs that hath the ſtrength of plea for the diſcharge

that must follow as the fruite of the covenant. If wee have faith before wee bee united unto Christ, if our eyes be opened before Christ be given to be the covenant, then Christ is anticipated and prevented: For, whereas he comes of purpose to open the blind eyes, and is given for this very thing, to open the blind eyes, the eyes are opened already, and this work is done before he comes; and so his coming, and the end thereof, is made frustrate, & in vain in that respect. In briefe, suppose that our faith doth act towards the discharge of our transgressions, then it must follow, it is not only the righteousnesse of Christ that pleads by way of Advocateship with the Father for this discharge. If thou come to the Lord, & plead out that for thy self by vertue of thy faith, which his righteousnesse alone was appointed for to do, and dost not wholly cast thy self upon that, as that which will bear thee out in all thy approaches to God; but joyn thy faith withall in the manner I have spoken, and say in thy heart, I believe, and in that plead thy discharge; if you put this into your plea for the discharge of sin, Christ only is not your sole Advocate, but your faith also doth concur with Christ in this office of Advocateship, and so you make it your Saviour, then which, what can be more dishonourable and more derogatory unto this glorious

office

office of his? For if wee muſt believe before God will juſtifie us, then the ſimple and only plea of Chriſts righteouſneſs alone is not all-ſufficient for God to pardon or to diſcharge ſin: For, ſuppoſe I have not yet believed, now the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, it ſeems, hath not ſtrength enough, till my believeing come in, and joyn with that righteouſneſs: But it is only the righteouſneſs of Chriſt that pleads out the juſtification of a perſon, and not the concurrence of our believing that pleads it out; our believing, I confeſſe, gives comfortable teſtimony that God hath freely juſtified perſons, in and through the alone righteouſneſs of his Son Chriſt, our believing doth conduce to the declaration and manifeſtation of that which God for Chriſts righteouſneſs ſake did doe. By faith wee have evidence of this thing, but it is not our believing that works the thing it ſelf. Now, it remains we goe on, and conſider further affirmatively, what this righteouſnes of his is, that carries the whole ſtrength of the plea, for the diſcharge of the people of God from their ſins which they have committed; I ſay, it is his righteouſneſs, and his alone. Now, this righteouſneſs is to be conſidered in the quality, quantity, and nature of it: concerning the quality and quantity of it in brief; that righteouſneſs that hath the ſtrength of plea for the diſcharge

charge of the ſins of Gods owne people, both for quantity and quality, it muſt be ſo powerfull, and ſo large and ſpacious, that it may ſerve to cover the whole naked neſſe of the perſon whom it doth concern; I ſay, this righteouſneſſe of his hath ſo much power and extent, and ſpaciouſneſſe in it, that it will ſerve to cover all: As large as the neceſſity and want is, ſo far it can cover. See how the Lord taxes the Church of Laodicea, Revelat. 3. 17, 18. *Behold, thou ſayeſt thou art rich, and art full of goods, and haſt need of nothing*; well, notwithſtanding her high conceit of her ſelf, that ſhe was rich, yet ſhe was poor, ſaith the Text, and naked, and lacked all things; and my councell is, ſaith he, *that thou buy of me gold, that thou mayeſt be rich, and that thou mayeſt be clothed with raiment of me, that the ſhame of thy nakedneſſe may not appear.* Here Chriſt puts the Church upon the way by which ſhee may be ſecured from that ſhee charges her with all. That he charges her with, is poverty, and wretchednesſe, blindneſſe and nakedneſſe; the courſe hee puts her upon, is to receive of him gold and white raiment: it is white, there is the excellent purity of it; and this rayment is ſo large and ſpacious, that if ſhe ſhould be covered therewith, not a jot of the ſhame of her nakedneſſe ſhall appear. And in the 19. of the *Revelations*, and the 8. verſe, you ſhall plainly

ſee,

see, that this white rayment is nothing else, but the righteousnesse of the Saints: *and it was granted unto her*, saith the Text, *that shee should be arrayed in fine linnen, clean and white*; for this clean linnen, saith the Text, is *the righteousnesse of the Saints*. The righteousnesse of the Saints not the righteousnesse acted by the Saints, but the righteousnesse of Christ, imputed to the Saints, and that is the pure, cleane, and white linnen: So in that text I mentioned unto you in *Ezek.* 16. verse 8. you shall find there this righteousnesse expressed, by a skirt spread over a person to cover the shame of his nakednesse. The summe is only this; the righteousnesse of Christ is such a kind of righteousnesse, that there is an ample compleat fulnesse in it to serve for every purpose to extend it selfe to the utmost of every transgression; That there is not so large a spreading of sinfulnesse; but this righteousnesse spreads it selfe perfectly over all, that none of this sinfulnesse doth appear.

But all the difficulty still lies, what righteousnesse this is of Christ, that is expressed to be so full and large, and pure.

For answer to this, you know there are two distinct natures in Christ; hee is perfect God, and compleate man, and answerably there are two distinct righteousnesses in Christ: there is the essentiall righteousnesse of Christ; the inseparable

ſeparable righteouſneſs of his God-head; and there is alſo the qualitative righteouſneſs of the humanity. Now, although it be true, that in reſpect of the ineffectable union of theſe two natures, both theſe righteouſneſſes areinſeparable to the perſon of Chriſt; yet it is as true, there is no more confounding of the righteouſneſſes of theſe two natures, then there is of the natures in the perſon; but we muſt conſider as diſtinctly the one as the other. Now, the queſtion lieth mainly in this, whether of the righteouſneſſes it is, which pleads the diſcharge of a ſinner, whether the righteouſneſs of God, ſimply as God, or the righteouſneſs of the humane nature. I anſwer, it is the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt; God ſimply conſidered is not Chriſt, nor the human nature ſimply conſidered is not Chriſt neither: But it is Chriſt God and man, ineffably knit & united in one, that makes up Chriſt. Accordingly I ſay, as Chriſt doth conſiſt of God and man joyntly; ſo the righteouſneſs that becomes the righteouſneſſe of Chriſts people, is the righteouſneſs of both united, and not the righteouſneſs of each ſeverally. The ſimple righteouſneſſe of the humanity of Chriſt alone, is too ſhort, is too narrow to cover all the filth of all the ſins of all the members of Chriſt: the ſimple eſſentiall righteouſneſſe of the God-head alone is not communicable

able to the perſons of men; but it is a righte-
ouſneſſe of God-man that carries the ſtrength
ſplea for the diſcharge of a ſinner, and ſome-
hing from both natures muſt neceſſarily con-
ur to the diſcharge of ſin.

Firſt, for the righteouſneſſe of the humane
ature of Chriſt, it conſiſts of two things.

1. In active obedience.
2. In paſſive obedience.

In doing the will of God commanded.

In ſuffering the will of God impoſed upon
im. This I ſay, is the righteouſneſſe of his hu-
nane nature. God, as he is ſimply conſidered,
s not capable of either of theſe two qualitative
ighteouſneſſes: The Divine nature is not ca-
able of them; God is not capable of obedi-
nce, becauſe there is no ſupreame above him,
o whom he ſhould yeeld obedience; and God
s not capable of paſſion, hee is not ſubject to
uffer; therefore this obedience and ſuffering
re properly the actions & paſſions of the hu-
nane nature, yet both of theſe do concur ne-
eſſarily toward the diſcha-ge of a Believer
rom ſin: His active obedience, that is in do-
ing the will of God; his paſſive obedience, in
uffering the Will of God. Compare theſe
things together, as they ſtand together in the
5. Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, 18,
19. verſes, you ſhall plainly there perceive, that

the-

the obedience, the doing of the will of God, is one branch of righteousness requisite in Christ towards the discharge of persons from their sins; *As by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation*, saith the Apostle, *so by the righteousnesse of one, the free gift came upon all to the justification of life*; here is a comparison, or rather an opposition, set between *Adams* offence, and Christs righteousness; as *Adams* offence brought judgment, so the righteousnesse of Christ brings justification and life to men. Yea, but what is that righteousnesse that is there spoken of, will you say? the Apostles own words will tell you plainly: *For, as by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, many are made righteous.* Observe it well, We are made righteous; How? It is by the obedience of one, that one is Christ. Well, but what is this obedience? It is an obedience set in opposition to *Adams* disobedience. What was *Adams* disobedience? the breach of the Law. What must Christs obedience be then, but the fulfilling of it? So it must be certainly true. It is directly against the Gospel of Christ to exclude the active obedience of *Christ* from power and share to plead out the cause of those that do believe; I say, the active obedience of Christ comes in to make the plea for this discharge; and as the active, so likewise the

the passive obedience of Christ too; the Scripture is more full in this, then in the other, because it is the compleatēt of all, the last things Christ went through for the discharge of the sins of men: You shall see there is no fruit that doth illustrate the discharge of a person from sin, but it is appropriated unto Christ suffering. If you speak of reconciliation, which consists of Gods exceptance of persons, and his agreeing with persons in the death of all controversie between God and a person; for that is reconciliation, when persons that were at variāce, are now made friends, & all things that were objected between them are answered, and no more for one to say against another; I say, if you speak of this reconciliation to God, it is appropriated to the blood of Christ: *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them:* But how, will you say, and by what means comes in this reconciliation? In the 5. Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, and the *6.* verse, you shall see how they come to that reconciliation: *If when we were enemies we were reconcīled to God by the death of his Son; now much more being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.* So that reconciliation you see, is attributed unto the death of Christ, that was the last act of the Sonof God for man: So againe, *You who were*

afarre off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Here you see the same thing in substance, given unto the blood of Christ, though in other words: Men that were afarre off; men that God was at controversie with; men who were at great distance from God, by the blood of Christ are made nigh againe: So likewise, the satisfaction that God takes for the discharge of sin, which God hath acknowledged, is said to be the travell of the soul of Christ: *He shall see of the travell of his soule, and he shall be satisfied with it.* The Apostle speaks in the generall in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, without blood there is no remission of sins; *Christ entred with his blood once, into the holy of holies, and thereby hee hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* Infinite it were to quote Scripture for the illustration of this, that to the sufferings of Christ, (which are indeed all summed up in his blood, in the shedding of blood, because that was the last of all, and the chiefe of all,) all blessings are attributed, as reconciliation, adoption, &c.

Thirdly, beloved, although it be most true, that the active and passive obedience of Christs humane nature must concur, to make up a righteousnesse, yet both these together, are not enough, there must be something more then all this. That is strange, will some say, what can there be more required, then the active and passive

paſſive obedience of Chriſt, to make up the righteouſneſſe of a perſon? Is not that ſufficient? Let me tell you, beloved, what the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of the righteouſneſſe whereby we come to be righteous, and diſcharged from ſin; he ſpeaks in a higher ſtrain then to appropriate it to the active and paſſive obedience of Chriſts humane nature only. In the 10. to the *Romans*, and verſe 3. when the Apoſtle taxeth the *Jews* for going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſueſſe, that which hee taxeth them withall, is, that *they did not ſubmit themſelves to the righteouſneſſe of God: Now the righteouſneſſe of God is manifeſted*, ſaith the ſame Apoſtle; and in the 5. Chapter of the 2. Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, and the laſt verſe; *He was made ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſſe of God in him.* I ſay, therefore, beloved, that the righteouſneſſe by which we attain to our diſcharge from ſin, and the pleading out of that diſcharge is the righteouſneſſe of God. The righteouſneſſe that doth give the full diſcharge to perſons from ſin, muſt have ſomething that is proper to God himſelf, conferred or added to the humane righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, as giving dignity to it; I ſay, ſomething that is proper to God himſelf, muſt concur with the active and paſſive obedience of Chriſt to make up a compleat righteouſneſs for the diſcharge of a ſinner

It is a known rule, nothing can give more to another, then it hath it self; the very active and passive humane obedience of Christ can give no more to man then that active and passive obedience hath in it self. Now, man considered as a sinner, hath need of more then barely the humane active and passive obedience of Christ to make him righteous; the sin that man doth commit, hath its extent according to the dignity of the person against whom the sin is committed. You know, beloved, that crimes against Magistrates, have a deeper tincture in them then any ordinary crime: The self-same offence committed against a Prince, that is committed against an inferiour person, hath its additions of extent and hainousnesse according to the person of the Prince offended. Now, sin is committed against an infinite Majesty, against an Infinite God, and so hath a more deepnesse of tincture and filthinesse in proportion to the injury done to such a Majesty; in that respect sin indeed becomes an infinite crime: For, still according to the injury done, in respect of the person injured, so is the offence; you know the difference in slanders: slander a poore man, and it may be the action will not beare above ten pounds for it; but slander a rich merchant, whose credit goes far, there men lay an action of a thousand pounds for

for the slander of such a man in regard of his degree, the richman being greater then others, and his credit being of greater value, the offence in taking away his credit is so much the more hainous and higher. Now, by how much God is greater then man by so much is the hainousnes of transgression cõmitted against God beyond all other transgressions whatsoever. Now, beloved, that righteousnesse that must save a person harmlesse, must have an extent in it that may reach as far as the transgression branches it self forth. Take unto your consideration the transgression committed against a Divine Majesty, take the active and passive obedience of Christ, as it is acted by his human nature only, it is but a created thing, it is but a finite thing, it cannot extend to such a height as to answer in proportion with the offence of the divine Majesty. Beloved, let it not seem strange, that the very Godhead it self must confer something of its own to the active and passive righteousnesse of Christ to make it a compleat righteousnes. The divine nature doth give value and vertue to the obedience and sufferings of the human nature. The divine nature addeth so much, as to raise up that created obedience to an infinite value and height of worth. All that I contend for at this time, is but this very thing; namely, that the divine

nature must give worth, and that simply the active and passive obedience of the humane nature of Christ is not sufficient of it selfe, without something of Gods own be communicated unto it to discharge a Believer from an infinite fault or guilt.

But what it is that God doth communicate (more then this, that he gives value to the humane righteousnesse) and how he doth communicate it, is a secret we know not. But this we are sure of, we are made the righteousnesse of God in Christ, and that righteousnesse of God is the righteousnesse by which we come to have our discharge from sin. The Apostle tells us in the 2. chap. of the Epistle to the *Colloss. In him*, speaking of Christ, *dwelt the fulnesse of the God head bodily; and wee are compleat in him*, saith the Text, the fulnesse of the God-head dwells in Christ, and we are compleat in that fulnesse of his, our compleatnesse consists in, and springs from the fulnesse of the God-head in Christ, as from its fountaine: There is certainly something in it worth our observation, that the Holy Ghost should take notice of a fulnesse of the God-head in Christ, before he speaks of a compleatnesse which we have in Christ. Surely it doth import that Christ doth communicate something that is Gods own unto us; and yet this will not import any essentiall

tiall thing that is wrought in our persons, as if Christ did substantially change our natures into Gods nature, or Gods into ours, which were a grosse absurdity. But this there is, there is a communication of an infinite value and vertue to the active and passive obedience of Christ: For the righteousnesse that becomes ours by which we stand compleat with God, it must have so much value, as I said, as may stand in proportion to the breach of the Law of God. Now, if there be but a righteousnesse of Christs humane nature consisting in his active conformity to the Law, and suffering for the breach of the Law, and we to stand in this righteousnes, this righteousnesse will not make us compleat: For, mark, he that is compleat, by the righteousnesse of Christ, that righteousnesse must serve for every purpose whatsoever; if there should be some defect, which the righteousnesse of Christ, as it is acted by him in his human nature doth not make up, in respect of such defect, we could not be compleat by it, although, that even as it is humane, it is absolutely compleat in his kinde, and without defect. This righteousnesse of a man doth consist in a conformity to the will of God revealed, and that in all relations whatsoever, and in all actions of those relations: Suppose a Magistrate (besides his common duties he is to per-

form, as he is a man, or a Christian) must perform the duties of his publike relation, he must do justice in judgment, and the like. Now, suppose he should be exact in all the common duties, as he is a Christian, and should still fail in the duties of his publike relation, he is not compleatly righteous, because there is a want of a Magistrates righteousnesse. Now, what is it that makes this man compleat in Christ? it must be the filling up that which is empty in him; there must be that found in Christs righteousnesse that may fill up this defect, or else there cannot be compleatnesse in this person: So likewise, if a father, or a mother doe fail in the duties of their relation, they must go to Christ for a righteousnesse to supply this and all other defects. Now, where will you finde it in Christ? He never was a Father, nor a mother; Christ did never perform these severall offices requisite to the severall relations; Christ never brought up children; Christ was never a Magistrate. When a father failes in the duties of his relation, where can he finde out a righteousnesse fit for him to make it up in Christ? Now therefore the divine nature either must adde some eminency of worth that must serve in the stead thereof, unto that the humane righteousnesse of Christ, which his active and passive obedience, as humane did not particu-

particularly effect, or else there cannot be a compleat righteousnesse given by Christ unto this person; and therefore, whereas it is objected against the active obedience of Christ; for as much as it doth not serve for us inregard it is not every way answerable unto the unrighteousnesse done by man, therefore there must come a righteousnesse of faith in stead of that righteousnesse. I say, the remedy is worse then the disease, and my ground is this; If Christs active obedience through non-performance of some particulars required of us, be not a compleat righteousnesse for every circumstance required, much lesse faith, wherein as acted by us, there is both omission of good, and cõmission of evil, which simply is sin, whereas the active obedience of Christ could not be charged with the least sin in any kinde; I say, much lesse can faith fill up this emptinesse, being it self sinfull, seeing the active obedience of Christ, being free from the least spot of sin, only through not-performance of these severall duties of these severall relations; and being but a created righteousnesse, could not fill it up; and therefore I collect from hence rather, that a supply here is from the dignity of the God head, which could not be in the active and passive obedience of Christ, and this shall be in the stead of every particular circumstance which ought to have been

been in the perfect accomplishment thereof. So that though we faile in our relations, as of fathers and mothers and Magistrates. And the active obedience of Christ hath not these particulars in it; yet this is supplyed by the eminency of worth of the person being God himself, and it cannot possibly be any otherwise supplyed, but by the giving such infinite value and vertue to that work Christ did, that though Christ did not every particular circumstance which is wanting in us, yet notwithstanding it doth amount in value to all particulars which we should have done.

Now, it remaineth that we should onely consider wherein the strength of the plea of that righteousnesse doth consist; we have considered what that righteousnes is; namely, the active and passive obedience of Christ, made of infinite value, by a supply of worth from the dignity of the person super-added thereunto; we should now, I say, have considered wherein the strength of the plea of that righteousnes doth consist.

There are but two wayes by which persons may be acquitted in judgement, being charged with any crime: Either by pleading and proving not guilty, or by pleading and proving ful satisfaction made, though there be guilt; either of these two wayes are enough to plead out a full discharge. As

As for the first way of plea, Christ manages it not, that is, Christ doth not plead *non factum*, Christ doth acknowledge this and that person did commit such and such transgression. It is true, this he doth not deny; but the strength of the plea of Christ doth consist in the latter, that though the fact be done, yet Christ by vertue of this righteousnesse pleads out a satisfaction, and by vertue of that satisfaction, hee pleads out a ful discharge for those that are his members

SERMON

SERMON VIII.

1 John 2. verſ. 1, 2.

Wee have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins, &c.

WE have heard from theſe words: Firſt, an Argument to prevaile over the people of God, to abſtain from ſinning: *My little children, I write theſe things to you, that you ſin not,* in the words before: This is urged as an Argument to perſwade them; namely, *Wee have an Advocate with the Father.* We have conſidered already the force of this Argument to prevaile to this thing required; and we have conſidered ſomething concerning the nature of the Argument it ſelf.

If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father. Here we conſidered what the Advocate-ſhip

hip of Christ is; namely, to plead a sentence for his peoples discharge according to the rules of justice and equity.

Secondly, whose cause it is that Christ doth advocate or plead.

Thirdly, how Christ is qualified and gifted unto this office of Advocateship:

He is first *Christ* that is called of God, and furnished by the Lord unto it.

Secondly, he is *Jesus Christ*, an effectuall, and prevailing Advocate, an Advocate that saves every client harmlesse, whose cause hee doth plead. *Jesus* is as much as a *Saviour* of his people from their sins.

We have considered thirdly, further, that Christ is qualified with righteousnesse; and herein also the strength of the plea of Christ, or the Argument of his plea: He pleads discharge from sinne by vertue of his own righteousnesse. Now, because this discharge doth depend upon this righteousnesse of his: We have proposed to your consideration what this righteousnesse is, that hath such strength of plea, as to obtain discharge from sin to the members of Christ after they have committed sin; wee have proposed it first negatively, secondly affirmatively. The righteousnesse that obtains discharge from sin, is no righteousnesse of our own, nothing we do hath prevalency in the

Court

Court of Heaven with God for our discharge. It is not our tears, our prayers, or our fasting that do prevaile with God, but the righteousnesse of Christ only; by the way a word or two before I go on: Let none think that the denying efficacy unto our performances for the procuring of our discharge from sinne, doth wholy take away or derogate, or eclypse these performances, which are the things God himselfe calleth for at our hands. I am not ignorant, what an aspersion is rather by men collected, then what can be justly raised out of what I have delivered; as if there should be a slighting and a derogating from the performances that are the businesse of a Christians conversation; as if denying efficacy to prevaile for discharge, should be the overthrowing of these performances in Gods people. You know what is said of fire, It is a good servant, but a bad master, useful in the harth, dangerous in the top of a house: I say, the like of all performances whatsoever; keep them within their due bounds they are for excellent uses, and for excellent purposes; Let them break out of their bounds, and they are dangerous: Rivers are usefull, but when they overflow their banks they drown all, they are good creatures within the banks, and water is usefull and necessary for many purposes, but nothing more dangerous

dangerous and destructive when it rieseth too high. Exact performances once into the Throne of Christ, give performances the peculiar priviledges of Christ; and they deny Christ, keep them in subordination to Christ, they are usefull in their kinde: Prayer, and fasting, and circumspect walking, and holinesse of conversation, so farre as they are kept within these bounds; namely, the glorifying of God, the manifestation of thankfulnesse, and our due obedience to divine Majesty, doing good to others, and as they are looked upon as the Ordinances of God in the performances of which, the Lord will be graciously pleased to meet with his people, and in them make good to them, things that are freely given by him before in Christ, so farre they are exceeding usefull: As for instance, God calls forth unto prayer, he calls forth unto fasting, what is the encouragement of men to performe these services, not a prevalency that these services themselves have with God, but because that he hath promised, that when his people call, he will answer: So for the promise sake, we are encouraged in the expectation that the Lord will be as good as his word, when we meet with him where he calls us forth to meet with him, so far we are encouraged: *These things will I doe*, saith the Lord, *yet for all this, I will be inquired of by*

the

the house of Israel. Observe it well, and in it you shall see the usefulnesse in seeking God in any way that the Lord will be sought in.

First, the Lord saith, *These things will I do;* the Lord hath bound himself, he cannot alter it, the word is gone out of his mouth, the thing shall come to passe, when it is once gone out of his mouth, he will make that good for his own sake, *and I will be sought unto by the house of Israel: I will doe it, you shall seeke mee; and when you seek me, I will make it good.* So when we come to the Ordinances, wee look to what God hath promised, and upon what God hath ingaged himself to make good to us: And when we are upon the Ordinances, our eye is, or ought to be, upon the promises, not upon our performances, and the Ordinances, as if these our qualifications, and doing this or that were the procurers of that we desire, but the procurer of that, is that which moved the Lord to make a promise.

Secondly, as our righteousnesse hath not plea in it to prevaile of it selfe for discharge of sin after commission, so neither hath faith it self any prevalency for the discharge of sin. I say, the plea of faith it self, hath no efficacy and strength in it to get discharge from sin. Faith improperly is called the righteousnesse of God. Look into the 10. of the *Romans*, the Apostle expresseth

expreſſeth himſelf to us: *The righteouſnes of faith ſpeaks on this wiſe*, &c. Here by the *righteouſnes of faith* there cannot be meant the righteouſneſſe of the act of believing, but the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt believed on.

I came to this aſſertion, that faith hath not ſuch prevalency of plea to diſcharge from ſin, I ſay not a prevalency of plea, as to obtain the diſcharge from ſin; Nay, faith hath not this prevalency, ſo much as to be an inſtrument to unite a ſoul unto Chriſt in its firſt union. I muſt deſire, beloved, in this caſe, yet once more to be marked and heeded, both attentively and ſpiritually, and ingenuouſly, and candidly. The aſſertion I delivered was this, and the reaſon why I deliver it again, I will tell you by and by. There is, I ſay, not ſuch a thing as an uniting and cementing, nor knitting power in faith, as that faith doth, or ſhould become the inſtrument to unite a ſoul in its firſt union unto Chriſt: For, before ſuch believing, a ſoul is united unto Chriſt, and a ſoul muſt be united unto Chriſt before it doth, or can believe: I ſaid this of elect perſons ſtill, and ſo carried it along to the end of the diſcourſe: That an elect perſon is united unto Chriſt before he can believe on Chriſt. Something I ſaid before for the cleering up of this truth, that a ſoul muſt be united unto Chriſt by Chriſts own power, be-

fore can there be believing on him. But, beloved, whereas we had thought the truth had been cleered up sufficiently, I have found it otherwise; I find that many stick and stumble at this assertion, there must be believing, faith some, before there can be union with Christ; and it is believing it self that makes up the first union with him.

Since the last time I spake unto you, I have received, and I suppose from an ingenuous spirit, for under such a stile it comes, an objection against this assertion, and weighing the objection, I finde it of weight enough to require an answer. Besides, I finde that divers other persons, exceedingly stick and stumble at it; and therefore I shall desire to cleer up this one thing, both by answering such objections that may be made against it, as also by letting you see what dangers necessarily follow upon the contrary. I shall, and do commend the candidnesse and ingenuity of those that seek to be informed in things they not yet so cleerly understand, while they do it with a spirit, rather seeking satisfaction, then to maintain contention.

Obj. The objection proposed is briefly this: Our Saviour very frequently in the Scripture holds forth believing, or faith, under the notion of coming unto him. The inference is this

this, coming doth imply, or ſuppoſe a diſtance between the perſon and Chriſt, till there be coming. The effect ſeems to be, that he that comes to another is at diſtance from him till he be come. The upſhot or concluſion is this: If believing be a coming to Chriſt, then thoſe perſons that do thus come by believing, before their believing are at diſtance from Chriſt; and if at diſtance from Chriſt, then there can be no union between Chriſt and them till their coming drawes them, and makes them neerer, and ſo their coming doth unite them. The ground of this objection is taken out of ſome portions of Scripture, divers are objected for it, and one ſeems to have ſome ſtrength with it, and that is in *Iohn*, 5. chap. and the 40. verſe: *You will not come to me that you might have life.* Whence it is inferred, that there is no life till there be coming, and this coming is believing, and ſo conſequently there can be no union till there be this believing. The Argument indeed is laid as ſtrong as may be, and peradventure, may ſeem to have an undeniable ſtrength in it. Now, I ſhall deſire and endeavour to anſwer this objection as candidly as it was made, and it may be, other objections that may be made like unto this ſhall be anſwered in the anſwer of this.

And, that you may better underſtand the

answer unto it, and the truth cleared, I shall answer two wayes, and it shall be,

1. In respect of the matter of the Argument.
2. In respect of the proof of it.

First, in respect of the matter of the Argument; The matter of it is this: before coming there must be a distance, and coming is believing, and therefore before believing, there must be necessarily a distance, and so consequently there must be no union.

Ans. For answer to this, beloved, we are to take into consideration: First, what is meant by distance, and then what by coming. If by distance in this place be meant dis-union, as it seems it is, (because the thing urged in the objection, is that there is not a union) then we shall proceed on accordingly.

First, for this word coming; you know full well, that coming is but an Allegoricall expression; and you must know, that all coming will not necessarily infer a distance before coming: Mark the expression in the 7. chapter to the *Hebrews*, *He is able to save to the utmost, all them that come to God by him*; here is mention made of coming to God, and of Christs ability to save them that come. Now, consider this with your selves: Suppose a Believer hath been a Believer many years together, and so also as long united unto Christ, Whether or no doth

doth not such a Believer still come to God by Jesus Christ? Certainly, Believers, after they are Believers, do frequently come unto God. Now, doth coming import a distance before there be a coming? then there is a distance, even a dis-union (for such a distance we are speaking of,) between Christ and Believers themselves, as oft as ever they do come. Observe that in the 17. chapter of *John*, where Christ speaks to the Father himself. *And now, Father, I come to thee*; Here Christ comes to the Father. I ask this question, Was Christ at a distance, or was Christ dis-united from the Father before he did come to the Father? For he saith, *now I come to thee*; it seems, before this coming, Christ was dis-united, if the Argument be good, that where is coming, there is a distance, and this coming makes up union that was not before. It seems by this, there was no union, but a distance between Christ himself and his Father till now at this very time that he doth come: But Christ himself, in that very same place, testifieth the contrary, saying, *Thou Father art in me, and I in thee*. In a word, coming, it seems, must import believing: Suppose it be so, must there be distance, or dis-union alwayes before such a coming? then consider this, that Believers, even to the end of their dayes, have occasion ever and anon to renew

their acts of believing, that is, to renew their act of coming to Christ: For, still take this along with you, that coming and believing are all one, for so saith the Objector. Well, is coming and believing all one? then Believers have cause every day, and every hour, to believe a fresh, that is, to renew acts of believing and is there distance of dis-union, before there be such coming? then it must follow, there must be union and dis-union, and union again, and dis-union again, and this as frequent at there is the renewing of the acts of faith.

Object. But some will say, peradventure the first act of coming to Christ, or the first act of believing, doth import dis-union; but all after acts of believing do not import dis-union.

Answ. To this I answer: Mark where the strength of the Argument lyeth, and you shall plainly see, there is the very same reason for after believing, as there is for the first act of believing: The first act of believing is coming, and is not two, three, or four acts of believing coming too? What coming is there more in one act of believing then in other acts of believing? If this be a generall rule, that believing is a coming, and coming argues a distance, and distance must necessarily be before coming, hence it must follow in brief, that it is no

solid

solid Argument, persons are dis-united, or not united unto Christ before the act of believing, because believing is a coming unto him: For, you say and grant, that there may be, and often is, a coming unto Christ by faith, and yet there may be union before such coming.

But now, to come to the proofes, to the texts of Scripture that are brought in for the confirmation of it: *You will not come to me, that you might have life.* The strength of the Argument it seems lies in this; there is no life till there be coming, and coming is for life it self; therefore there is no union, till there be coming by way of believing.

For answer to this, and so to cleer up the meaning of the Holy Ghost: In this text of Scripture, we are, first, to consider, what our Saviour means by coming in this place, *You will not come to me*: And secondly, we shall consider, what this life is that Christ speaks of which they should have in coming to him.

And to begin with the first, what that coming is our Saviour speaks of in in this place; *You will not come to me, that you might have life.* I will not insist upon this, that Christ did speak to the opposers, men that did contest with him, and so that he doth speak to persons with reference and relation unto others: For, I verily believe, though our Saviour speaks this to the

Pharisees, who certainly never should come to Christ, nor have life by Christ; yet his intent was to speak to them to whom the life of Christ did belong, and who should come to him. Let us therefore stay, consider what he means by *coming* in this place. In *John* 6. vers. 44. there you shall have our Saviour plainly expounding unto you, what he doth mean by coming unto him: *No man*, saith he there, *cometh unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* Mark the expression well, and therein you shall perceive what Christ means by first coming unto him: For, in that place, *You will not come to me, that you might have life*, Christ speaks of first coming, and not of after coming: *No man cometh unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* In which words you may perceive the act of first coming to Christ, is rather by, and from the Father, then by any activity in the person that comes: For, coming there, is plainly attributed unto a drawing act of the Father. So that the first coming to Christ, is just like the coming of a froward childe to meet the mother; the childe hath taken a stomach, and is sullen and dogged, the childe will not stir; if the childe be carried, it strives and struggles, wherefore the Father of this childe is fain to take up this childe, and by a kinde of force to carry it with an overmaster-

ing

ing ſtrength where meat is. The childe comes to his meat, but how? not by any act of the childe, as if he did come of himſelf, but by the power and over-maſtering of him that brings the childe: A coach we ſay comes to town; when it is but drawn to town, and yet it is ſaid to come. The coach is wholly paſſive, the childe is paſſive in coming to meat; and ſo every elect perſon at his firſt coming to Chriſt; the coming of this elect perſon to Chriſt is a paſſive coming: And the coming of this perſon is nothing elſe but the Fathers over-maſtering and drawing of this perſon elected unto Chriſt. In the 31. of *Ieremiah*, the Lord ſpeaking there of the converſion of *Ephraim*, *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me*, ſaith *Ephraim*, *& I was chaſtiſed as a bullock unacquainted to the yoak; convert thou me, and I ſhall be converted. Ephraim* here appropriates the act of his converſion, not to any coming of his own, but only to the Lord himſelf, acknowledging, that the work of bringing unto Chriſt is the work of Gods own drawing; nay, he ſheweth, that he himſelf was ſo far from coming, that he did confeſſe, that when God took him firſt in hand, to bring him to Chriſt, he was as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoak. It is true, in a common ſpeech the bullock is ſaid to come unto the yoak, even a bullock unaccuſtomed, but how? by meer force he is brought

brought to it, and not that he is brought willingly to it. Beloved, you must either establish the rotten Principle of *Free-will*, that is, a pervious principle of a mans own spirit to come to Christ, or you must confesse that persons at their first coming unto Christ, are meerly passive. It is a known principle: we are first acted, or actuated, before we do, or can act; there is not only a weaknesse simply before calling, but there is a deadnesse, and therefore there cannot be coming; and if there be, it is meerly passive, and the whole businesse must be the Fathers own drawing. In the 110. *Psalme*, and about the 3. verse, the Lord speaks to Christ thus: *Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power*. There is no willingnesse till the over-ruling and overcoming power of Christ comes in to make and frame a willingnesse even contrary to the naturall will.

The summe then briefly is this, and so to apply it to the Text objected, *You will not come to me, that you might have life*, that is, it hath not pleased the Father to draw you unto me, that you might have life. I cannot conceive how there can be any other sense given to the Text, but that it is the Fathers sole and only power, and the overcoming act of his, to bring to Christ, that there may be life. Now, what will be the sense of the words? it will be only this,

this, there is no principle of life from Christ, till the Father by his over-ruling and over-mastering power, do bring unruly and crosse spirits unto Christ.

Object. But it may be some will say, though this coming to Christ be the act of the Fathers drawing, yet there is an act of believing when the Father doth draw.

Answ. I answer, it is not possible there should be an act of our believing while the Father is first drawing; mark what believing is in summe and substance, it is but a yeelding to the minde of the Lord revealed; I say, the yeelding of mans spirits to the minde of God; while persons are contradicting persons, they are not believing persons in respect of those things that they do contradict: To believe, and to contradict the same thing, is a contradiction: For, to believe, is to sit down satisfied with the thing that is related and reported; as long therefore, as persons are contradicting persons; as long as their spirits are crosse spirits, as long as they do kick against that which God doth propose unto them, so long do they not believe. Now, while the Father is drawing, that very drawing is an argument of resisting, and a kinde of kicking against that which the Father doth aim at: For, if there were yeelding; if there were a submitting; if there were

were a willing coming on to the truth reveald, what need there any drawing? men do not draw those things that do come of themselves, And therefore I say, during the Fathers first act of drawing, the Father laying violent hold, as it were, upon the person, there is no act of believing. The truth is this, the Father gives his elect to Christ his Son: *Thine they were*, saith Christ, in the 17. of *Iohn*, *and thou gavest them me*; and the Father that gave the elect unto Christ, he gives unto Christ also power, both in heaven and in earth: so saith Christ in the 28. of *Matthew*, and in the latter end, *All power*, saith he *both in heaven & earth, is given me: Go teach all nations*, as much as to say, I give you Apostles, and Ministers, that follow you, a commission from my self, a commission to preach, and in preaching to convert; and how so? *All power in heaven and earth is mine.* So that, beloved, the Lord takes his elect as they are self-willed, and as they are untamed, he brings them as they are self-willed and untamed to his Son, and by vertue of all power that is given to that Son, when they are brought unto him, he himself doth break, tame, and bring them to his own bent: *The Father*, saith Christ, *judgeth no man but hath committed all judgement to the Son.* Take notice of it, that now, as Christ is ordained the Mediator of the covenant, the Father

ther doth nothing towards, or concerning his elect people, but what he doth by his Son, it is the Son doth all; so that all that the Father doth, is to deliver up elect persons, such as they are in blood, enemies, and rebellious, he delivers them up to his Son: and the framing of their spirits to his own bent, is the sole work of Christ himself; Christ is become by the donation of the Father, the life and the soul of every elect person. Now, the Philosophers do observe of the naturall soul, that it is the framer of its own body, and the maker of its own organs, that so they may be fitted for it to act its own will: so may I say, is it with Christ, Christ hath the framing and the disposing of the whole man, to bring every thing in this man to his own bent: The Father bringing the creature, as he is a stubborn and stiff-necked creature, so delivers him up to his Son; so that, I say, there is not a previous foregoing act wrought by the Father without Christ; I say, no previous act of believing wrought by the Father, or by the Spirit, without Christ, by which a person comes, and doth close with Christ, but the Father doth give that person without any faith at all, or any qualifications whatsoever, to his Son; and his Son, Christ himself, he frames and creates that very faith in persons to come to him; and therefore in

the

the 42. of *Isai.* v. 6. you shall plainly see, there is not an opening of blind eyes, a giving of believing eyes, to close with Christ before Christ himself be given, and given as a covenant to persons: So saith the Text, *I will give thee for a covenant*; Here you see Christ tailed to persons, not with a supposition, that when persons do believe he shall be theirs, and they his, but, *I will give thee for a covenant to open the blind eyes*; Here is not the eyes opened before Christ comes, but Christ comes when the eyes are blind, and when he comes, he opens the eyes that are blind.

But to go further; Let us suppose, that coming into this place, is spoken of believing: *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life*; it cannot follow, that although there be no life till believing, therefore there can be no union till believing: I say, if it possibly might be imagined, that there may not be life from Christ, till believing, yet it follows not, that there must be believing before there is union. Nay, beloved, there is nothing clearer in all the world then this principle; namely, Suppose there cannot be life before there be believing, yet there must be union before there can be life fetched from Christ; I say, there must be union before believing can fetch life from Christ: For, suppose that the fruit upon a branch should have such a faculty to draw life into the branch from the root;

root; though this would be a ſtrange conceit, that the fruit growing upon a tree, ſhould have a faculty to draw life from the root to the branch, whereas the root communicates life to the branch, and the branch by vertue of that life communicated, brings forth fruit. But yet, ſuppoſe the fruit ſhould draw life into the branch from the root, that is, ſuppoſe that faith which is a fruit, growing upon a member of Chriſt, that is a Believer, and a branch of that body; ſuppoſe that faith this fruit ſhould have ſuch a faculty to draw life from Chriſt the root into the branch, yet it is impoſſible that faith ſhould draw life into the branch, till the branch be united unto the ſtock For, beloved, that is Chriſts compariſon: *I am the Vine, ye are the branches*; Now, take this compariſon; ſuppoſe a branch growing upon a wilde Olive, is cut off from the wilde Olive, and for the preſent it is not united to the good Olive tree; Now, can a wilde Olive, or ſuppoſe it to be a good Olive upon this branch of the wilde tree, can this fruit upon the branch draw life from the root of the good Olive tree, while it is ſeparated and laid aſide, and is not united to the good Olive, from which root it muſt draw life? It is known to all men, that communion is the fruit of union; there is no participation nor communion of any thing that

is

is Christs, but as it doth flow from union with Christ; so that either you must say, that faith which you speak of, is not of Christ the root, but hath some other root and fountain from whence it hath its being and essence; or else you must confesse, if Christ be the root, then it must come from Christ by vertue of union of a Believer to Christ first.

Finally, suppose it should be, that coming is believing; suppose that this life spoken of here, is not in persons till they do believe: What is meant by life here? Beloved, I beseech you consider, the Apostle tells us, *our life is hid with Christ in God*; *and Christ is the life of the world*, that is, of the elect. It seems then that the life of every elect person hath a being in Christ, before he doth believe; believing therefore doth not produce a new life that was not before, only it manifests that life which was before; and it makes that life which was before, an active life; or is an instrument by which that life that is hid in Christ, doth now after believing, become an active and appearing life in this person. So that all that can be made of this, is but this; till believing, there is no activeness of the life of Christ in the person that is elected, his life is in Christ, and was in Christ, and reserved in Christ, till the time of believing for him; and then doth he

the

the elect person, become active in life, when Christ doth give him to believe actually.

But to say that this believing should give the first being of that life that should be in persons, is to say, there is not the life of the elect persons in Christ before they do believe.

In a word, beloved, I shall seriously desire you, that with candidness and ingenuity of spirit, you would take into your consideration, those dangerous consequences that must of necessity follow, if you will receive this for a Principle, that there is no justification and union at all belonging unto elect persons, till they do actually believe in Christ, ; I say, If this be maintained, dangerous consequences must needs follow upon it; if persons are not united unto Christ, and doe not partake of justification before they doe believe, but that believing is the instrument by which they are first united, then mark what will follow upon it.

First this, that in some respect there will be a bringing to life again the covenant of works. How will that be, will you say? I beseech you consider it well; The Apostle will tell you so as well as I: The Lord told *Adam* at first, *Doe this and live*; *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandements*, saith Christ to the rich man: And the Apostle in the 10. Chap. to the *Romans*, about the 4. and 5. verses, tells us of the

covenant of Works cleerly: *Moſes*, ſaith he, deſcribing the righteouſneſſe of the Law, ſaith thus: *He that doth theſe things, ſhall even live in them*; mark here the covenant of Works, out of theſe expreſſions, is this; namely, for perſons to do, that they may live: The covenant of Grace runs upon contrary terms; men muſt firſt live, that they may doe: God in his covenant of Grace, gives life firſt, and from life comes doing. In the covenant of Works, there muſt be firſt doing for life.

Object. But you will ſay, how doth this follow out of this conceit, that men muſt believe, before they ſhall live in Chriſt.

Anſw. I anſwer, thus; you muſt of neceſſity preſſe upon your ſelves theſe terms, or ſuch like, I muſt do, that I may have life in Chriſt, I muſt believe, there is no life till I do believe; now, if there muſt be living firſt, then there is doing before living.

Object. But it may be you will ſay, Faith is oppoſed to Works and doing.

Anſ. I anſwer, when it is oppoſed to Works, it be underſtood objectively, that is, it is underſtood of Chriſt believed on, and not of the act it ſelf of believing; for it is certain, beloved, our act of believing, is as much our doing, as our acts of love, or our acts of charity, even as much our doing as any of theſe. So that here

here must first be doing before life be obtained; if persons must first believe before they have union with Christ.

Secondly, if there must be our act of believing before there be participating in Christ, then mark what will follow; those sins which were once laid upon Christ, and taken away from the elect; for they could not be laid upon him, unlesse they were taken from them, they are, it seems, returned back again, upon this Believer, whereas they were charged upon Christ, whereas Christ once paid the full price, whereas upon the paiment of this price, there was acknowledged full satisfaction; so that those sins were once blotted out; I say, if there must be believing before there be union with, or interest in Christ, it must necessarily follow, that till such believing, the person of that elect, doth beare his own transgression, and is chargeable for his owne transgressions, and his transgressions are imputed unto him. But how can it stand with the glory of the Redemption of Christ, that Christ should have all iniquity laid upon himself, carring all iniquity like the Scape Goat into the Land of forgetfulnesse, and yet till the time of that elect, persons believing these sins are returned from the Land of forgetfulnes whither they were once carryed, and they are afresh charged upon this person

agine. Did Christ bear them away? and did Christ return them back again? Where did you ever finde, that sin once taken away, and carryed away by Christ from the person offending, did returne back again upon the person from whom Christ took it way?

Thirdly, suppose this, that men have no intereſt in Christ till actually they do believe in him, then it must follow, that these persons, till they are actually believers, are under the hatred of God: For, if they bear their own transgressions themselves, then God being a jealous God, his holy and pure nature everlastingly hating iniquity, and also the person upon whom iniquity is charged; there must be a hatred of God upon these persons till they do believe; and to conceive that God doth hate these persons, is to conceive that God may love and hate the same person, whereas he saith, in the 19. Chap. to the *Romans*, concerning *Jacob*, that being yet unborn, *Jacob have I loved*; here you see love is communicated to *Jacob*, being yet unborn. Now mark, *Jacob* when he was not yet born, was not an actuall believer, till after times, *Jacob* was not come to believe. Well, had *Jacob* no intereſt in Christ and the love of God till such time as he did believe? Yea, *hee had* so saith the Text. I, but yet *Iacob* must be hated till he doth believe, because *Jacob*, till he doth

doth believe, muſt bear his own tranſgreſſions; ſo that here muſt be at the ſame time, upon the ſame perſon, both the love and hatred of God, and how can theſe contraries ſtand together?

Yet again; Suppoſe perſons have no intereſt in Chriſt untill they do actually believe, it muſt follow from thence neceſſarily, that there is a believing in ſuch perſons before they have union with Chriſt, and then you muſt make ſome other root from whence this believing of perſons muſt ſpring; as for Chriſt, it hath nothing to do with him, for he hath nothing in regard of communicating his Grace & Spirit to do with them, but they are Beleevers, and their believing is that which knits the knot between Chriſt and them; Whence comes this believing? where is the root of it? Is Chriſt the root? then have they firſt union with Chriſt, that they may receive it from him; then muſt they firſt be united unto Chriſt, and made one with him, and live in him, and by vertue of union with him, receive this faith as a fruit of that union. If it proceed from ſome other root, I beſeech you conſider how it can be, and how can this be avoided, but that this conceit muſt needs be exceeding derogatory to Chriſt, to make another foundation beſides Chriſt, whereas in *Heb.* 12. it is expreſly ſaid there, *Chriſt is the author as well as the finiſher of faith*? Beloved, upon theſe conſidera-

tions, for my own part, I have receiv'd this principle that I have delivered unto you, and meerly the vindication of the glorious priviledges which are proper & peculiar unto Christ alone, is the occasion that I do refer the being of faith it self unto Christ, and to nothing else in the world, and that I may uphold these particular and glorious prerogatives that are proper to Christ, that he may not be robbed of any of them. To this end, I deliver it to you, that elect persons have a participation and share in Christ himself, even before they do beleive, & let none conceive that this takes away or diminisheth from the prerogative of believing neither. For there are glorious things done by faith unto believers, God hath honoured it above all meer creatures in the world; he hath made it the conduit pipe for the conveyance of all that peace and comfort; nay, of al that strength which believers have all their lives; no faith, no comfort; no faith, no peace of conscience; no faith, no plesure to walk with God: through faith Christ conveys himself in speaking peace to the soul, in bidding the soul be of good cheer; the soul lies in darknes, while it lies in unbelief. But still that which is proper & peculiar to Christ alone, is not to be ascribed unto believing. I should now proceed (having as well as I can, taken away the rubs) to that which I purpose to follow. But the time is past.

SERMON

SERMON IX

1 John 2. verſ. 1, 2.

If any man ſin, wee have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins &c.

WEe have conſidered already the Office of Christ here ſpoken of; his Advocateſhip: We have conſidered the cauſe he manages, & alſo the perſons whoſe cauſe it is that he doth manage. The cauſe he manageth, is in behalfe of the ſinnes of his people, and the perſons are not preſent Believers, but all elected perſons, though yet unbelievers: Wee further conſidered, the indowments and qualifications of Christ unto this Office.

Firſt, he is Christ that is called of God unto it, and furniſhed by God for it.

Secondly, he is Jesus, he takes no cause in hand, but he saves his client.

Thirdly, he is *Christ Jesus the Righteous*, the efficacy of the plea of Christ lyeth in this righteousnes of his, that being the soule hinge upon which the doore turneth. In the large opening of this righteousnes unto you, I spake first, negatively. The plea that prevails for the discharge of sin, is not our works; no, not our faith; but it is the righteousnes of Christ himself that only serves to make up the strength of this plea: Secondly, affirmatively; There is,

First, an active righteousnes of Christ; For, *by the obedience of one man, many shall be made righteous*, Rom. 5. 19.

Secondly, the passive righteousnes of Christ: *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin*, 1 Joh. 1. 7. But it is the divine righteousnes, or dignity of the divine God-head that adds an efficacy and life, and vertue, making the active and passive righteousnes of Christ a compleat righteousnesse, that wee might be compleat in him; and we gave a touch to you, wherein the efficacy of the plea of this righteousnes stands. The efficacy of it stands in the satisfaction that righteousnes hath made to the justice of God. In judgment there are but two wayes to be acquitted, either just proof, that the person upon triall is not guilty, or being

ing guilty, the Law is already satisfied. The strength of the plea of the righteousnesse of Christ, insists not upon the first way, hee grants the persons whose cause he pleads, had for matter of fact, done the thing that is charged; but the strength of his plea is, that the Law on their behalf is satisfied already. This latter plea being good, hath the like force for acquittance and discharge as the former hath; So that the sentence of judgement can no more passe upon the person for whom the Law is satisfied, then it can upon persons that never transgressed the Law.

Now it remains to be considered by way of objection out of the premises, how this can be, that the justice of God should be satisfied, seeing the satisfaction of justice is the bringing of a recompence to answer in proportion for the offence that is committed. The ground of the objection is this, all that Christ, as man, brings unto God, comes short to make a full recompence. I told you before, that the divine righteousnes is that that makes the righteousnesse compleat, and that a meer humane righteousnesse is not able to effect, till it be infinite, or be made infinite by the divine righteousnesse. Now, when Christ brings a recompence to the Father for the transgressions of men, that that he brings to him by way of recompence, should not

not be that which was his own before. Now, what ever the divine righteousness is, that is Gods own, the active and passive obedience of Christs human nature, that is brought to him, but the divine righteousness is not brought. You will say, this is just as one man oweth another an hundred pounds, and he sueth this man for it; now, the debtor, he cannot raise above ten pounds of this money: but the creditor must make it up out of his own purse. So then here is the ground of the objection, and the truth is, this matter contains in it, the depth of the mysterie of the Gospel, that justice should be satisfied by bringing a recompence for transgression, and yet the recompence, as it is brought, is not so much as will answer the injury that is done of it self. It is true, there is enough in the divine Righteousnesse to make the satisfaction for the injury done; But how is this divine Righteousnesse brought?

It is most certainly true, therefore, even where there is satisfaction of justice in this case, there is also mercy too: For, although God be just to forgive sin, yet observe the phrase well, you shall finde, that where the Apostle speaks of justice in this act of forgiveness of sins, he speaks of mercy too: You know, to forgive a thing is an act of grace and mercy; yet, even while there is forgivenes there is

is manifested the act of justice, Justice it selfe takes its course, even while there is forgivness. But this, you will say, doth not resolve the question: Where can there be a satisfaction of justice, seeing there is not brought by way of recompence, that which might be proportionable to the injury done?

Answ. 1. First of all, justice is satisfied in the strictest sense, when there is such a plenary and equivalent recompence given, that the person injured thereby, is in as good estate every way, as he was before the injury done: When a man is trespassed against, and doth sue the man for this trespasse, and when the man doth make up, and bring in as much recompence as the injury commeth to; so that the party trespassed is worth as much as he was before, here is a plenary satisfaction of justice. Now comes in the objection, and sayes, that the justice of God cannot be said to be so satisfied, because the active and passive obedience of Christ, as humane, bring not in so much to God as the injury comes to, and what is from the Godhead, is Gods own before.

Secondly, therefore some say, that there is a satisfying justice properly, though there be not a full recompence, as in every point to answer the injury done; I will but give you a familiar illustration of it, that you may not say,

it

it is not unknown, and an unheard of thing, that justice is satisfied, although no plenary recompence in the former sense for satisfaction be brought. Suppose one man murther another, an ordinary case; now, for a plenary recompence to the injury done, he that is slain must be *in statu quo prius*, that is, he that is slain must be made alive again; and till that person slain be restored to life, here is not a compleat recompence made But how is it possible, that any man that hath committed murther, should make this full and plenary recompence to the person that is injured? He cannot restore life to him again; and yet for all this, although he cannot bring in a full recompence in this way, this man may properly satisfie justice: For, if life answer for life, if the murtherer be executed, the Law and Justice may truly be said to be satisfied. Here then they say, that there may be satisfaction of justice, and yet not the fulnes of recompence in the strictest sense brought in. Justice, I say, is satisfied in this respect, because here is as much brought in by way of recompence, as is possible to be had. You know, beloved, you have a Proverb, *Where there is nothing to be had, the King must lose his right:* when a man payes all that ever he hath, he can pay no more, he doth satisfie justice. In this sense justice is said to be satisfied, when the Law of

justice

justice is satisfied; and so the satisfying of justice doth not necessarily imply the fulness of recompence in the strictest sense, according to the injury done. How cometh it to passe, when a murtherer is executed, that upon this execution of the murtherer onely, the Law doth esteem this tobe a recompence, and justice to be satisfied, though it be not a plenary recompence answering the injury that is done; but onelyas it answers to the Law, that is the rule of justice, so it is satisfaction: Even so, say they, the justice of God is truly satisfied, when the will and pleasure of God is fulfilled, whether or no there be a bringing in a full and plenary recompence. If the will and pleasure of God be satisfied, concerning transgression, that satisfaction of the will of God, is the satisfaction of the justice of God. Now, what is the will of God? It is this, that in the day that man sins, man must die; either he must doe it in person, or he must do it by deputation, for among men the satisfaction of the Law is made, either in the mans own person that is the debtor, or his surety that will pay the debt for him. The Law in some cases, looks more upon the thing that is brought in to answer to it, than it doth upon the person that doth bring the thing in. The justice of God looks upon the fulfilling of his will, although it be not by the same person that

that sinned; this alters not the nature of the thing, whether I my self pay the debt, or another for me pay my debt, the payment is satisfactory, so in that the will of God hath set utmost bounds for the satisfying of justice, whereas transgression must be recompenced with death. Now, Christ the surety of his people, going under the punishment, and fulfilling the punishment, the Law is satisfied, because every tittle of the Law is fulfilled, and there is nothing in the Law remaines to be answered.

But yet, thirdly, I say, further, that the satisfaction of Christ is compleat, even in the strictest sense, although it be granted that the bare sufferings and righteousnes of the humane nature cannot effect it without the divine nature, and the righteousnesse thereof: and whereas it is urged, that the righteousnes of the divine nature is Gods own already, it is granted, and that both because it is essentiall unto God, and incommunicable unto the creature; therefore, and also for the reasons alledged before in the objection, it cannot be formally, either the whole, or any part of our righteousnesse; yet notwithstanding the divine nature, and so the divine righteousnes doth so by the Hypostaticall Union fit and furnish Christ to be an All-sufficient Saviour, and

and satisfier, that thereby the person of Christ is so glorious, that his active and passive obedience is thereby made of infinite worth and value, that so he might give satisfaction for us, compleat & perfect; and that in the strictest sense, making a full reparation and restauration of all things in the behalfe of the elect, for whom he undertakes, and brings upon them salvation to the uttermost.

In brief, beloved, and so to conclude this businesse, though there may be some hint given for your better understanding, by way of illustration, how justice may be satisfied yet the truth is, the fullest and most satisfying resolution wherewith persons ought sit down without further dispute, is not by argumentation, but by divine faith. Suppose wee could not sound the bottome of this Principle, that Gods justice should be satisfyed, yet we may sit down as fully resolved that it is satisfyed, though we know not how it should be so, in that the Lord reveales to us he is satisfied, whose word must be more to us then all the evidences and demonstrations in the world can be by way of Argument, that here Christ is said to be the propitiation for our sins, that God himself doth acknowledge else-where, that he is satisfied. What matter is it to me how he is satisfied; I mean, in respect of resolving me by way of Argument,

gument, how he should be satisfied, his own Word speaking it, and resolving it to us, is that with which we should sit down withall, without any further dispute. If therefore all this while you cannot know how he is satisfied, your believing upon the testimony of God's Word that it is so, may be as full a satisfaction to you; yea may be, a more full resolution to your spirits, then all the arguments and demonstrations in the world can be.

And so I come in brief, to the last clause of the Text; namely, the issue of this Advocateship of Christ, in the behalf of his people when they sin. The issue is this, *He is the propitiation for our sins*; I say, the words containe in them the upshot, or the conclusion of the pleading of Christ, telling us what this pleading of Christ comes to at the last; it comes to this, that by this pleading of his, Christ becomes the propitiation for our sins. The main thing to be considered here, that wee may understand aright our portion in this Grace, is to know what this propitiation meaneth, or what it is for Christ to be a propitiation. Beloved, there is abundance of marrow and fatnesse in this very word, and I doubt much of it is lost, in respect of sense and comfort, for lack of understanding the extent of the word: That you may the better therefore dive into the mysterie of

of this Propitiation, you must understand, that the word in the originall ἱλαστήριος, is of the same originall and signification with the word the *Septuagint* translation doth use, when they do interpret the Hebrew word that is rendred by Mercy-seat, for Mercy-seat is here Propitiation, *he is our Propitiation*, that is, he is our Mercy-seat. And if you would know in Scripture what it is for Christ to be our Mercy-seat, look into the 16. Chapter of *Leviticus*, and the 14. and 15. verses, you shall there finde the main end, for which this was erected by the Lord; For of all those Ordinances that the Lord did establish among the Jews this Mercy-seat was the uppermost. Now, if you mark in the 16. Chapter of *Leviticus*, you shall finde three things especially appropriated unto the Mercy-seat.

The first is the sweet incense that none ought to make upon pain of death, but *Aaron* alone, that incense must burn upon the Golden Altar every morning before the Mercy-seat.

Secondly, you shall finde that the most notable of all the Rites and Types of the Jews, was to be prepared before the Mercy-seat, the Type of the *Scape Goat* with the *Live Goat*, as you may finde it registered there, and handled at large in that Chapter. The *Live Goat* must be brought before the Mercy-seat, and *Aaron* must

lay his hand upon the head of it, and, then the *Scape Goat* must be sent into the Wilderness, and carry the sins of the people into a land of forgetfulnesse.

Thirdly, at this Mercy-seat, as it is in Exod. 30. chap. vers. 6. the Lord did appoint to meet with *Moses*, and there to speak graciously unto him; and there God will hear him speak, and God will be heard to speak, and will return his gracious answer at the Mercy-seat. Well then, to come to the businesse in hand, that I may cleer it the better; Christ is our Mercy-seat, that is, the incense, or the sweet savour that smells with acceptance and delight in the nostrils of the Lord, as I may so speak; I say, that which makes a sweet savour, is the Mercy-seat. Incense, had it been burned any where else, (but here according to the appointment and commission of the Lord every morning) the very place it self, being changed, would have taken away the savour of the Incense before the Lord; therefore the Mercy-seat is that for which the incense becomes a sweet savour; as much as to say, all our prayers, and all our duties and services (notwithstanding our sins, being believers) become as a sweet savour to the Lord, as they are presented up before the Mercy-seat by Christ; he is the Propitiation then, that is, it is he by whom our persons and performances

formances become a sweet savour to the Lord, a sweet incense. Again, the *Scape Goat* and the *Live Goat* to be slain, were to be prepared before the Mercy-seat, as much as to say, our sins are carryed away into a land of forgetfulnesse by vertue of Christ; as the *Scape Goat* being presented before the Mercy-seat was made a type and capable to carry away the sins of the people into a Land of forgetfulnesse; So that as we are presented unto God, in and through Christ, so our sins are carryed by Christ into a land of forgetfulnesse.

Lastly, before this Mercy-seat the Lord appeared, and at the Mercy-seat God will return his gracious answer; as much as to say, in Christ, and through Christ, the Lord returns all the gracious answers that are returned to his people upon earth; Not a voyce of grace, not a voyce of peace, not a voyce of comfort is to be heard, but at the Mercy-seat: For mark well, you shall finde God hath made over all that gracious language of heaven unto his Son Christ, and only unto his Son Christ there came this voyce from heaven when he was baptized: *This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.* But upon the Mount the voyce was a little more plain; for upon the Mount it saith: *This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased, hear him*; as much as to say, all the

grace I have to ſpeak to men, I have put it into the mouth of Chriſt my Son, and not a voyce is to be expected of grace from me, but as it cometh out of the mouth of my Son; there is not a word of comfort to be heard, but as it is ſpoken from the Mercy-ſeat; ſo that putting theſe three things together, in reſpect of the ſacrifice of the *Scape Goat* (the Text in *Leviticus* telling us of an atonement that is made by the preſenting of this ſacrifice before the Mercy-ſeat.) In a word, the ſum of all is this:

1. In and through Chriſt our Advocate, we become a ſweet ſavour to the Lord.

2. There is an atonement made with the Lord for us, our ſins being carryed into a land of forgetfulneſſe.

3. And in Chriſt, the Lord doth ſpeak all the gracious language of heaven, to us.

Now, whereas at this Mercy-ſeat the ſpeciall thing intimated unto us, is the atonement that is made. It ſeems that propitiation hath reference in the ſignification of it, to atonement, as when a man deſires one that is at variance with him, that he would be propitious, that is to ſay, he would admit of a propitiation, or atonement, Now, that you may know what atonement is, and ſo propitiation likewiſe, Look into the 5. of the Romans, and the 9. and 10. verſes, there ſaith the Apoſtle, *If*

When

into *when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God,*
oyce *by the death of his Son, much more being reconci-*
as led *shall we be saved by his life.* Reconciliation,
re is What is that? Mark what follows, *and not only so*
it is *but We rejoyce in God through our Lord Iesus*
ting *Christ, by Whom we have received atonement:*
the first, you see he makes a Proposition hypotheti-
iti- cally, by way of supposition: *If When we were e-*
e by *nemies we were reconciled, much more being re-*
rcy- *conciled shall We be saved by his life.* And in the
next words, the Apostle proves that there is re-
, we conciliation, or rather shews the fruits of it, being
the obtained: *We rejoyce,* saith he, In what? We re-
and joyce in him by whom we have received the
atonement. What is atonement? Atonement in
this place is but the reconciliation which Christ
all makes between God and persons; So that th up-
shot is, Propitiation indeed, comes at the last, or
ci- runs at the last into this cistern; namely, re-
ent conciliation with God; herein lyeth the effica-
ath cy of the plea of Christ for his people commit-
he- ting sin: Christ is the Mercy-seat, the Propiti-
va- ation, the Atonement, or Reconciliation. This
us, is the issue of the plea of Christ; when Christ
ia- doth plead for discharge, this pleading pro-
w duceth reconciliation between God and this
e- person. If we could but dive into the mysterie
he of reconciliation between God and us, wee
If should then finde the comfort of this Office of

Christ to be a propitiation for us. Now, if you will know what this reconciliation is, which is indeed an interpretation of propitiation: observe, I pray you, beloved, how the Apostle doth illustrate it in the 2. chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. and the 13. verse: *You that were sometimes afar off, hath he made nigh by the blood of Christ.* Reconciliation is making nigh those persons who were sometimes afarre off; and that you may the better understand this being afarre off, look into the 1. chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, the 21, and 22. verses, the Apostle there will tell you, in what respect the members of Christ, the elect are said to be afarre off. *You who were sometimes alienated & strangers, & enemies in your minds by wicked works, hath he now reconciled.* So then to be afarre off, and of afarre off to be made nigh, is as much as to say, that persons who were alienated in respect of enmitie, in their mindes, in regard of wicked works, these persons, notwithstanding all that enmity, in respect of wicked works, they are made nigh, they are reconciled. You know well, in respect of the persons of men, who are elected persons, they are from all eternity in the purpose of God, made nigh by the vertue of the blood of Christ, that in time should be shed, which vertue of that blood is effectuall in the eyes and thoughts

thoughts of God from all eternity, so that although in respect of the nature of wicked works there be a separating and an alienating nature and quality, yet in regard of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, being in force with God, the persons who are elected in the thoughts of God, are nigh to him in purpose, from eternity. So that alienation and estrangement, in respect of eternity against God, is not to be understood, as if elect persons were in very deed, and properly at any time decreed to be separated absolutely from God; no, God had them in his thoughts, as the objects of his love from eternity, and these thoughts of being nigh were intended to be executed through that blood that was continually in his eye: *But*, saith the Apostle, *you that were alienated in your mindes through Wicked Works*; that is, you who so far forth as you wrought wicked works, had that in you, which in its own nature was the cause of alienation, and could not admit of your being neer, and being in the thoughts of Gods love, till there were reconciliation made: *by Christ hath he made nigh*; that is, whereas these wicked works were those things that did in their own nature actually and for the present, make you walk at a distance from God, and so in respect of wicked works you were afarre off, you are now made nigh by the

blood of Christ, that is, Christ hath taken away sin, the cause of that distance between God and you, and also hath revealed himself unto you, being Believers; and in revealing himself to you, he hath made known to you the eternall counsel of God concerning your reconciliation, and that now you are actually and really in the very bowels of God, and also he doth in some measure subdue and destroy the power of Satan in those wicked works; so that there is now a neernesse; I say, there is a more neernesse even in conversation with God, after calling and believing, then there was before calling; and the blood of Christ is that that maks persons who were far off, nigh again to God. And this is the reconciliation; namely, whereas there was a distance before, there is now a neernesse; and this neernes is by the blood of Christ as by a sacrifice of propitiation. That you may the better understand the nature of reconciliation with God, you must know, that reconciliation properly imports thus much, that whereas there is variance, estrangement, and a controversie between person and person, a person is then said to bee reconciled, when the breach is made up, and the controversie is ended, and the quarrell is done, and the persons at variance are become friends again. You know, as long as there is hitting in the

the teeth, as long as there is secret grudges, as long as there is objectings one against another, and prosecuting one another in respect of injuries done, so long there is not reconciliation; When men are reconciled they lay down the bucklers, they quarrell no more, they fight no more, but walk as friends together. And if they should walk as friends in outward semblance, and yet should bear rancor in their spirits one against another, this were but an hypocriticall reconciliation. In reconciliation, the very heart it self is made friends with persons reconciled. All this imports unto us thus much, Christ is become to beleevers the atonement, one that makes a peace with God, he is he that ends the controversie, and the quarrell, between God and them; whereas God was injured, and might have prosecuted the Law with violence upon us, Christ doth bring to passe, that the Lord layes down the buckler, to have no more to say against a person, but to become friends with him. You know, that reconciliation is such a thing, as is not only a making friends to day, but a making friends so, that there may be a continuation of this amity. You cannot call this reconciliation, when men are brought together, and their controversies are ended now to day, but upon the same controversie they will fall out again

to

to morrow, here is not reconciliation; for, in reconciliation, there must be a burying of all that which was the subject & matter of the quarrel. So Christ being our reconciliation, he making our peace with God, doth not bring God to be friends with us to day, so as to fall out with us to morrow again; but to be friends with us for ever. Therefore by the way know, that every person reconciled unto God by Christ, is not only a person becoming a friend of God now, but a friend of God for ever: And as Christ doth take away the present anger of God against him to day, so he takes away all quarrels and controversies for ever: So that a person reconciled shall never have God at controversie any more with him. Some, it may be, do conceive, Christ doth reconcile God and us in respect of sins that are past; but if I sin anew, say they, God must have new controversies, and new quarrels. But, beloved, remember this, he did bear all the iniquitie at once upon him; and when he made the reconciliation with God, he brought in all the trangressions of men, from first to last, and so ended the quarrel with God, in respect of every transgression, even for sins future, as well as for those that are past. He dealt so with God, that he did reconcile him to you in respect of them. So that Christ must either leave out those sins

sins you think breaks the peace with God in the agreement he made; or, if he did not leave them out, then that reconciliation doth as much concern those sins, as other transgressions already committed. Now, think whether of these be true doctrine, either that Christ should leave some sins out, that are brought now again into controversie, and so God be again at controversie, and begin to fall out with persons for them; or whether he make agreement for all, and all comes into reconciliation. Therefore, I say, suppose two men are at variance, they have a hundred actions one against another; a friend comes in and agitates to make up the business between them, he brings in every one of these hundred actions to this agreement, he dealeth so with them, that all the controversie between them in respect of these actions shall die; and so he makes them friends. Now, I ask, when all the trespasses and actions are brought into the agreement, may these men fall to quarrelling and suits of Law for any of these particulars brought into the agreement? They cannot do it, beloved, if Christ brought in all the transgressions of his people into the agreement, and they were all satisfied for, by him, every one of them: *His blood cleanseth from all sin*, as saith the Apostle: I say, if all were brought into agreement at once, how cometh

it

it to passe, that God should again fall out, and be at controversie with men for any of these sins that were in the agreement before in that reconciliation made? Therefore, know for certain, for your everlasting and eternall consolation, that there is nothing shall be able to separate you from the love of God in Christ, nothing shall make a breach between God and you, who are the people of God. Every sin which in its own nature indeed makes a breach, is taken into the agreement that Christ makes with the Father; and if there should be such an objection rising in your hearts when you haue committed a sin, now God is at controversie with me for this. Ask your hearts this question: Was this sin brought into the agreement of reconciliation, or was it left out? Did God accept of the reconciliation when this transgression was in the agreement? how can he then fall out again for this that was in his thoughts when reconciliation was made? But this may seem to be but discourse only, and therefore take a view of some passages of Scripture, whereby you shall see as cleer as the light, that God's reconciliation to men, is one entire and simple act. This reconciliation being once made, there is no more quarrell and controversie that God should prosecute these persons reconciled. Look into the 9. Chapter of *Daniel*,

and

and the 24. verse, there is a time mentioned of making reconciliation; if you look into the Prophesie, you shall therein see the effects that do accompany the reconciliation made. I have heretofore recited other effects unto you, but not this: *Seventy weeks* saith he, *shall be determined upon thy people and holy City*; for what? *for the finishing of transgression, for the making an end of sin, and making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in of everlasting righteousnes.* Observe it well, when reconciliation is made, then there is an end of the matter that did breed and feed the controversie and quarrell. When there is a controversie of God against a person, the controversie must spring from the sins of that person; but when there is reconciliation made, there is a finishing of transgression, and a putting an end to sin. Take away the cause and the effect vanisheth of it self; but observe the Text a little more yet to shew the unchangeablenesse of this reconciliation, when reconciliation is made, there is, saith he, in the next word, *brought in everlasting righteousnes*. Righteousnesse, as you have heard before, is that that doth both beget, and feed, and preserve peace and reconciliation with God. So then, this fountain of righteousnesse must bee drawn dry, before the peace that is made by this fountain can be wasted. How comes it to passe,

passe a Lamp goeth out, but because the oyl is wast d that feeds the Lamp: so the righteousnesse of Christ is the oyl that feeds the reconciliation made: Either this righteousnesse must be spent, or the Lamp of peace cannot go out. But, saith the Holy Ghost, there is brought in upon reconciliation, *everlasting righteousnesse*; So that it is cleer, when God reconciles himself to persons, they are reconciled for ever to him. Consider also that excellent expression in 54. of Isa. in the 9. and 10. verses: *This is to me*, saith the Lord, *as the waters of Noah*: *For, as I have sworn that the Waters of Noah shal no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I wil not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee any more; the mountains shal depart, and the hils shal be removed, but my loving kindnes shal not depart from thee*, saith the Lord *that hath mercy on thee*. The very expresse words shew the excellent qualities of that reconciliation that is produced by the bringing in of a better covenant there spoken of. Mark it well I beseech you, for there are admirable expressions in it: The thing God proclaims is this, That he will not be wroth; that he will not fall out any more with his people; and this thing the Lord confirms by an oath: *as I have sworn that the Waters of Noah shall be no more upon the earth: so have I sworn I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee any more.*

You

You see here the confirmation of it by an oath, and what can be more binding then the oath of God?

Well, secondly, take notice of the continuance of this: *He hath sworn, and will not be wroth, nor rebuke*, but how long will not he be wroth, nor rebuke? Even so long as flouds shall cease to drown the world. God hath sworn, that till the world shall be drowned with water again, God will not be wroth with his people; so saith the Text: As long as water shall not come upon the earth, nay longer, if longer may be, *The mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed, but my loving kindnes shall not depart from thee*: as much as to say, the loving kindnesse of God shall remain stedfast to the people reconciled to him, even longer then the mountains shall stand fast, and the hills unremoved. This I say is established by such a firm covenant, by such an oath, and out of the mouth of so glorious a Lord, that the hearts of Gods people may be established and secure, that God will not be wroth with them.

Object. But whereas some may say the Lord speaks in this place, in the 17. verse, *In a little wrath have I hid my face for a moment*; therefore it seems it is not to be taken for such a perpetuall forbearance of wrath.

Answ. Consider, that all along this Chapter the

the Prophet speaks of the Church of God, in a two-fold estate: he speaks to it one while as it is a wife of youth; and another while, as her breasts are grown: As a wife of youth; so the Lord for a moment hid his face; but as a wife that is grown up, so the Lord will not be wroth with her, nor rebuke her any more. The Apostle *Paul* doth most excellently expound this different estate of the Church, in the time before and after Christ: In the 3. Chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, and the latter end of that Chapter, and the beginning of the 4. Chapter, There was, saith he, a time of minority, wherein, even an heir, being but a childe, differeth nothing at all, in respect of outward carriage from a servant, though even then he be Lord of all. In the 4. Chap. and verse 1. to the Galatians, and this time of being a servant, is not for ever, saith the Apostle, *but till the time appointed of the Father*. Here, in respect of outward usage, during this minority, there is no difference between such a person, and him that is not an heir at all, but he is under Tutors, and Governours, that is, he feels alike of the rod, and still this is till the time appointed of the Father: See how the Apostle expounds the words, even so *we* saith he, *while we were children in our non-age, were in bondage under the elements of the world*; we did partake of the

common

common calamities of the world, but how long was this? *When the fulnesse of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* There was a redemption, even in the minority of the Church, when the Church was at the youngest age, there was redemption, but not a redemption in respect of that which he speakes of here, that was a redemption from that condition wherein the heire did not differ from a servant; therefore, most properly, according to the coherence of the words, the redemption most properly and specially spoken of here, was a redemption from a condition wherein they did not differ from servants, into a condition wherein they should differ. So in the 54. Chap. of *Isaiah*, verse 8. there is such a difference in this two-fold estate of the Church, as is between a wife of youth, and a wife grown up; What is that, you will say? I answer, you know, even among men, they marry children when they are but two or three yeares of age; the childe, she is a married wife, and yet for all this, while she is foure or five, yea, six or seven yeers of age, she is used as one that is not married, there is no difference between this childe and one that is not married, both are corrected, and both are whipped; but when she cometh

to riper yeers of age, and hath the actuall fruition of her husband, then she cometh to be freed from the rod, and receiveth all the immunities and priviledges of a wife, which she, though a wife, did not enjoy before: And so in this Text, the Church as a childe under age, and wife of youth, is visited for a moment, and there is a kind of hiding the face of God while she is as the wife of youth; but when the time of riper age is come, then *this shall be as the waters of* Noah *to me; as I have sworn that the waters of* Noah *shall no more drown the earth; so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.* Thus beloved, you see, that God once reconciled, he never falls out with his people any more. It is true indeed, he doth chastise them, hee doth correct them, but he never doth it in wrath, he never doth it in fury. In the 27. of *Isaiah*, and the 4. verse, speaking of his Church, that he would watch it night and day, he saith, *fury is not in me*; he hath no acquaintance with fury, in reference unto such persons. And therefore, although it be true, there may be afflictions, and these afflictions may be exceeding tart to the flesh; even when a person is grown, and when a Church is grown up; yet notwithstanding there is not wrath in these afflictions: *Every sonne*, saith God,

God, *I love, I rebuke and chaſten :* There is love even in chaſtiſements, and the fruit of it is love, to take away ſinne. The end why God ſends theſe afflictions, is not in wrath for ſinne, but to purge them from their filth. God takes occaſion when his people doe ſinne, to chaſtiſe them in love; but that chaſtiſement is no fruit of the wrath of God, it is no fruit of the curſe of God, nor ſentence of the Law, but the tender compaſſions of a loving Father, that makes uſe of them for his childrens good : There is as much reconciliation with God under the rod, as when perſons are not under the rod : A father may love a childe as dearely when hee corrects him, as when he gives him plums. It is thus with God, children reconciled to him, as he corrects a child committing a fault, he never whips him but there is feare he will commit it againe; and therefore he doth chaſtiſe him to prevent a fault; He doth not puniſh him to pacifie his anger for the fault committed. So God, in reſpect of the Church, for the purging of his Church, and for triall in theſe reſpects, he will chaſtiſe, and in chaſtiſing he will convey the Spirit of amendment to them; but in reſpect of what is done, were it not to have them purged for the future, he would never afflict his people for that which is paſt. So that, I

say, though this be the great Objection that troubles mens spirits, they fall daily into troubles and afflictions, here is wrath and enmity, reconciliation is not firm, God is now fallen out; yet, beloved, know, that God is not fallen out with his people when he chastiseth them. No man under Heaven can suffer under afflictions, more then Christ himself did; yet, saith God, hee is my beloved Son, not my hated Son, but my beloved Son, I afflict. It is true indeed, as the Apostle *Paul* speaks: *No affliction at first seems joyous, but grievous*; yet, *afterwards it bringeth forth the pleasant fruits of righteousnesse to those that are exercised therewith.* Consider this one thing; Can God poure wrath when he intends onely the good of his people, to purge his people, to bring them as gold out of the fire? Certainly, what *David* had experience of, shall be the fruit of all the afflictions of all the members of Christ, though they be never so many, and great: *Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have learned to keep thy Laws.* Whereupon hee saith, that it was good for him he was afflicted. God afflicts to teach, God afflicts to draw home, God afflicts to refine and purge: You know, the Merchant doth not in wrath fling away his gold, when he puts it into the refining pot; it is no argument

gument of leſſe love, onely he would have his gold tried and refined, and the droſſe taken away out of it: It is ſo with God; all the members of Chriſt, all that Chriſt hath prevailed for with the Father, they are the beloved of the Father, and the darlings of his ſoule, and his love ceaſeth not; nay, his love diminiſheth not to them when they are under the rod.

One word of application, and ſo I ſhall have done: Is it ſo, beloved, that Chriſt is ſuch an Advocate, that having ſuch a ſtrength of plea in his righteouſneſſe, he produceth ſuch a good iſſue, as to bring at the laſt, reconciliation? In a word then, you know what to truſt unto for your ſoules diſcharge and comfort: *In many things wee ſin all*; what ſhould uphold your ſpirits, that your ſinnes ſhould not ſink your ſoules? Here is held out unto you the great Supporter, the Righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, the Righteouſneſſe of God: *I will uphold thee with the right hand of thy righteouſneſſe*, Iſaiah 41. verſ. 10. *feare not, be not diſcouraged*; and why? the cloſe of all is this; *I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſſe*: If you goe any where elſe for ſupport, when ſin is committed, your ſins will ſink you, and ſwallow you up, nothing can beare you up in reſpect of the weight of ſin, but the right

hand of his righteousnesse ; that alone is the thing that must uphold your spirits ; or nothing at all can doe it ; O that the Lord would be pleased to work upon your spirits, to betake your selves to this support , and to fix your spirits upon the fulnesse of support and strength, that is, in this righteousnesse of his. When the *Israelites* were stung by the fiery Serpents , it was not the applying of a plaister could heal them, only the brazen Serpent could heal them, and nothing but the brazen Serpent. Oh, look upon the brazen Serpent, the Lord Jesus ; look not upon any other plaister in the world , but him, to heal your wounded soules stung with the Serpent of your sins; though they may serve for other uses, yet they have not so much vertue in them , as to heale the sting of sin : Fix your eyes here, cast your selves here, rest here, let the weight of your souls lean here: *Hee that believeth shall be saved ; hee that believeth not shall be damned ; He that believeth shall be established ; hee that believeth not , shall not be established.* Oh , go not to Christ , as if there were not enough in him to answer your transgressions , that you must carry something else with you to him , that may be a help to your discharge ; if ever discharge from heaven come unto your spirits , it is onely the hand of Christ by his Spirit , that must

bring

bring it down to you ; and nothing in the world can doe it, but that diſcharge, as it is recorded in the Word of Grace, in things that come by relation unto men, and ſo are opened unto them. How can men be ſatisfied concerning the thing reported, but upon the credit of him that is the reporter, thereof to ſit down ſatisfied by faith concerning the truth thereof? Let a man tell me never ſo good news, if I doe not believe him, my ſpirit is not ſatisfied. So, concerning the diſcharge from ſin, beloved, you heare it related from heaven : *Wee have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins.* Now, there is no way in the world to know that there is ſuch a thing as an Advocate and Propitiation, but as it is revealed from heaven. The Apoſtle *Iohn* ; hee indeed reveales it here ; if hee had delivered it meerly as hee is man, ſo it had occaſioned ſuſpicion and doubting, but as it is the revelation of the Holy Ghoſt, and of Chriſt himſelfe by the Apoſtle, ſo wee are to ſtick cloſe unto it, and wee ſhall finde reſt unto our ſoules, as wee can credit the report of it ; therefore as the Lord will work upon your ſpirits, take up your reſt where reſt is to be found ; ſo your ſouls ſhall reſt, you ſhall lie down and ſleep in peace and ſafety, you ſhall ſing and leap for joy ; and

you ſhall have all peace, and joy in believing. O that men would keep up the dying language of a Martyr: *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt*, in matters of faith, and ſtability of ſpirit; in matters of peace of conſcience, as well as in matters of ſalvation, And ſo I ſhall commend this word to the grace of God, in reſpect of the iſſue thereof upon your ſpirits.

SERMON

SERMON X

SOLOMONS SONG, 4. 10.

Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no ſpot in thee.

THe Goſpel of Chriſt being the great and invaluable treaſure of the Church, the *Helena* for which the Church ſhould contend; yea, the Sanctuary and refuge thereof; It hath pleaſed the Holy Ghoſt to preſent and hold forth this Goſpel in variety, or change of rayment, as I may ſo ſpeak; ſometimes preſenting the Goſpel, as it were in a cloud, more darkly by Viſions and dreams, when deep ſleep was fallen upon Gods people. Thus the Lord in former ages frequently held out the Goſpel, eſpecially in that notable example of *Jacob*, who, while he ſlept, had the Goſpel

Goſpel preached unto him, in the viſion of a ladder, that reached from earth unto heaven, by which the Angels aſcended and deſcended; which Ladder was nothing elſe but Chriſt, by whom alone the ſons of men doe mount, from the loweſt condition of Sin and Miſery, to the higheſt condition of Grace and Glory. Sometimes the Goſpel was brought forth to the Church with a maſk upon the face of it, I mean, in hard Riddles, and dark Sentences, to exerciſe the wits of Gods people; and thus among other times, the Goſpel was preſented unto *Sampſon*. You know the Riddle that was put forth, occaſioned by a Lion ſlaine by him, which being dead, there was a ſtocke of honey in the Lion, which repreſented unto his thoughts, the admirable benefit and priviledge of the preaching of the Goſpel: *Out of the eater came meat, and out of the ſtrong came ſweetneſſe.* It was nothing elſe but this; Jeſus Chriſt the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, by death had a ſtock of honey, not only nouriſhing, but ſweet to the eater. Sometimes again, the Goſpel was preſented, though not with ſo darke maſks, yet with a vail over the viſage and face of it, that though ſome of the beauty of it might be ſeen, yet in reſpect of the glory of it, in an obſcure way; and thus the Goſpel was exhibited unto the *Jewes* in their types and ſhadowes,

and

and thus the Gospel was held forth in their Sacrifices, Temples, Tabernacles, Altars, Mercy-seat, and Incense, and the like: In all of which there was a generall darkness; namely, a puting over the face of *Moses* a vail, who in that represented Christ the Mediator, as he was to be exhibited unto the people in those times; and yet, although for royalty and honours sake, the Gospel was vailed; yet sometimes the Holy Ghost was pleased to lift up the vail for a moment, as it were, that there might some glance of the beauty of it appeare; Even in those times, now and then, a Prophet would out with some admirable expression of the Gospel: But this was but as the breaking forth of light in a darke night. Sometimes again, the Gospel was presented in a Propheticall habit, and so it was held out, as it were, at a remote distance, that even an elevated and supernaturall eye had as much as it could do to see it in the proportion of the Gospel. And this was the dispensation of the Gospel in the Prophets. Sometimes also the Gospel was presented under a parabolicall habit; and thus it pleased our Saviour to exhibit it in his time, delighting much to see it in this dresse: in so much, that all the Gospel he spake, almost, was clothed in that habit; and so the kingdome of heaven was likened unto Leaven, hid in three measures of meal, and

unto

unto Mustard-seed, and unto Treasure hid in a field, and so he goeth on, setting of it forth under all sorts of comparisons to illustrate it. Finally, the Gospel is presented sometimes without either vail or mask over it, in its owne proper beauty, shining forth from the face of it, nothing at all hindering the prospect of it, in its own proportion; and thus was the Gospel presented unto the Disciples, when they said unto Christ: *Now thou speakest unto us plainly, and not by Parables.* Unto us that live now, at this present the Gospel of Christ is represented in all these variety of dresses together to administer the more delight. It is accounted one of the greatest pieces of honour in a State for a Prince to have changes of rayment every day. Now, the Lord will put so much state upon his Gospel, that it shal not always go in one dresse or habit

Now, the Text that I have read unto you, holds out the Gospel in Christs owne way, which was so much affected by him, I mean, in a parabolicall habit. The most glorious excellencies of the Gospel, as it doth pertain to the Church of God, are composed in this Text: *Thou art all fair my Love, there is no spot in thee.* This text, as the whole song throughout, is nothing else but an elevated strain of discourse between Christ and his Church, or a song tuned to the highest note that ever song was sung; which

which discourse is an interchangeable speech between Christ and his Church; the Church acting her part first, in the second verse of the first Chapter: *Let him kisse me with the kisses of his mouth*; being amiable sweet discourse indeed: then she falls upon the high commendation of this love of hers, exalting the praise of her husband Christ above the skie, which kindled such a strong affection in her, that she seemed to be far from him, that she was not neere enough unto him; she called unto him therefore, that hee would draw her neerer unto him: *Draw me, and wee will run after thee*, saith the Church. And that she may come the neerer, she begs of him, to tell her where she may finde him in a neerer communion with him than yet she had. Hereupon, her part being ended, Christ he begins to tune his note to an higher strain, in answering the Church, than the Church began to him: If thou knowest not, *O thou faire∫t among women*, saith Christ; here after his commendation of her, he directs her where she may meet with him; by the foot-steps of the flocks; by the tents of the shepherds, there she shall have him. And then he falls again upon the exalting and commending of her excellent perfections, by many and severall comparisons: the Church by and by in the 16. verse, retorts the commendation that Christ

Chriſt gives unto her, upon Chriſt againe: *My Beloved is fair; Behold, my Beloved is all fair, and pleaſant.* Thus you ſee, here is a making forth of the praiſes of each others excellency, and of the high eſteem each hath of other, each to other in their mutuall diſcourſe: Chriſt ſaith of the Church, *Thou art the faireſt among women*; the Church ſhe replies againe, *Behold, thou art fair*; and thus they go on in admirable expreſſions of the praiſes of each other. It would be too large to run over all the particulars of the ſweet intercourſe between Chriſt and his Church. Now in the Text, Chriſt retorts that commendation back againe unto the Church, that the Church before had given unto him: Thus ſhe having begun to fall into the high commendation of her love, he afterwards follows, *O thou faireſt among women*; ſhe retorts it upon him, *Thou art fair my Love, thou art all fair.* Well, Chriſt will not have it reſt there, he will have the laſt word, as I may ſay, he retorts it back againe to her, ſaying, in the words of the Text: *Thou art all fair my Love, there is no ſpot in thee:* So that here is an out-vying, as it were, between Chriſt and his Church, which ſhould mount higheſt in the praiſe of each other, extolling the excellency of each other unto the skies; the burthen of the ſong being this ſtill: *Thou art fair; thou art all fair my Love.* In the words themſelves, you may

may obſerve in generall, the high commendation that Chriſt gives of his Church, and unto the Church her ſelf; in which commendation, you may note:

Firſt, the moſt gracious amiable title that Chriſt gives unto her, he calls her *Love*, the ſweeteſt title a Husband can give a Wife; but there is an addition of one Article that doth mightily advance the indearedneſſe of Chriſt, in reſpect of the ſpecialty thereof; namely, *MY LOVE*; *thou art all fair, MY LOVE.*

Secondly, note here in the words, the matter of the praiſe, and commendation that Chriſt gives to his Church, it is expreſſed in that which is accounted moſt deſireable; *fairneſſe*; *thou art fair*; but in this matter of praiſe there is a double addition that doth exceed the praiſe the Church gives unto Chriſt before. The Church is not only fair, but *all fair*; *Thou art all fair, my Love.*

Secondly, for the further illuſtration of this beauty, there is a ſecond addition; *Thou art all fair, thou haſt no ſpot in thee.*

Finally, in the words you may note the time of which Chriſt ſpeaks: Every man receives this Principle, that in glory in Heaven, there ſhall be perfection of beauty, in which the Church ſhall ſtand. But if Chriſt had ſpoken of the ſtate of glory, he would have declared him-

himſelf in the future Tenſe, *Thou ſhalt be all fair my Love.* But it is obſerveable, Chriſt ſpeakes here in the preſent Tenſe, of the preſent time of the Church, as he hath communion with her here in this world: *Thou art all fair.* There is a great deale of difference between the Tenſes. It is one thing to ſay of a man, Thou ſhalt be rich, and another thing to ſay, Thou art rich. It is true, the Church ſhall be all fair in glory, and it is as true, the Church is all fair now: *Thou art all fair my Love, there is no ſpot in thee.*

That theſe words are the language of Chriſt unto his Church, may appear to you, if you will conſider.

Firſt, what is ſpoken before; there is the commendation of the breaſts. Now, commendation of breaſts hath reference to the Spouſe; but moſt plainly it appeares in the words that follow the Text, in the 8. verſe, *Come with me from Lebanon my Spouſe,* ſaith Chriſt; either they muſt be the words of Chriſt to the Church, or they muſt be the words of the Church to Chriſt; but they cannot be the words of the Church to Chriſt, for the Church doth not call Chriſt the Spouſe; for the word Spouſe is ſpoken in reference to the woman, and not to the man. You ſhall have it further cleered in the contents of the chapter, which ſhew the drift of the whole chapter, the Author

I

of the contents holds forth according to the *Hebrew*, where the Genders are more distinct then in our English; that these very words are the expressions of Christ unto his Church. Whereby you see that this is no new doctrine, neither is it set forth by any obscure person, being delivered by *Solomon*, or rather by Christ personated by *Solomon*, that the Church should be all fair and without spot.

The Proposition is briefly this: *That the Love of Christ is all fair, and without spot,* You may remember, beloved, that I have hitherto at large indeavoured to set forth the Gospel of our blessed Saviour to you, in the first great part thereof (the Gospel consisting principally in two things, the negative and the affirmative priviledges of the members of Christ their great priviledge, and invaluable benefit, being, first, exemption from evill; and secondly, a participating of all good things.) All the discourse I have had with you hitherto, hath had reference principally to the former branch of the Gospel, setting forth to you the gracious discharge of the members of Christ from all iniquity; and so consequently from all the fruits of iniquity in these words: *And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*; and I have further shewed you, how the people of God, and members of Christ, do partake of such

discharge as this is, which is the way of God, by which the sons of men, Believers, can have their portion, and their possession of this immunity: and that out of the Text of *John*: *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.*

It was in my thoughts, beloved, to have made particular progresse into the Text that I have read unto you; but yet in some respect a necessity lies upon me to give you a brief touch of something I have formerly delivered, by way of acquitting my self from injurious slanders. It is, and hath been my portion, and I know, not unknown to many of you, that while I have laboured freely, and by the assistance of the Spirit of the Lord, indeavoured to make known the minde of the Lord to the comfort and rest of the weary and heavy laden, I my self have not wanted my burthen; yet, were it not for the Gospels sake, lest that should receive prejudice, I should never open my mouth to vindicate a truth, as it doth concern my self, in so publick a way. But as there hath been most false imputations laid upon me, in respect of the Gospel; so for the Gospels sake only, I shall acquit my self publikely before you of such things as are most injuriously charged upon me. It hath been affirmed, and that by persons

persons, who have gone for persons of credit, (and consequently the wound must strike the deeper, and the report must take the greater impression) it hath been given forth, I say, that in my discourse among you, I should deliver to you, that the active and passive obedience of Christ considered as θεάνθρωπος, that is Christ considered both as God and man, that the active and passive obedience of Christ in reference to both his natures, hath not a sufficiency in it to make up a compleat righteousness for us; and further, that the ground of it should be this; Namely, that Christ did not perform the severall duties of the severall relations wherein many persons stand; as the office of a Magistrate, and the relation of a Husband, &c. For the vindicating of my self herein, I shall repeat the matter I delivered before, and you shall also know the truth of what my judgement is in this thing; and then leave it to the Church of God, whether it be a slander or no. This I then said; that the active and passive obedience of Christ properly, are the actions and passions of the humane nature; for the divine nature is not subject to obedience, because there is not any superiour to whom the divine nature should obey; neither is it subject to passion, God cannot suffer, and therefore doing the commands, and suffering the punishments, are

more proper to the actions of the humane nature. And this humane nature is but a meer creature, and therefore the actions of it as a creature, cannot extend to a proportion answerable to the injurie done by sin to God: For this cause, I say, as I said before, there must be an addition of vertue from the divine nature of Christ to make the active and passive obedience of the humane nature a compleat righteousnesse. So that all I said is this: That the actions and passions of the humane nature, are not sufficient to make up our righteousnesse a compleat righteousnesse, but there must be something of the divine nature superadded to raise up a righteousnesse proportionable to the transgressions we commit. And that expression concerning the not performing of duties of these several relations; I spake it only to this purpose, to shew wherein the humane nature of Christ in obedience, did not fulfill every thing in particular, which is the duty of a man; and that therefore the divine nature of Christ by the eminent dignity thereof, is, as I said before, to make up that righteousnesse a compleat righteousnesse. Concerning this, whether it be truth or no, let the Church judge, according to the word: As for θεάνθρωπος, Christ as God and man, it is well known, I used not the word, neither had I the thing in my minde, nor

in

in my tongue to the purpose they alledge it against me. In a word, this I say, that Christ as God and man, hath in himself an absolute compleatnesse of righteousnesse, for all the elect persons. There need not be a going forth from Christ to any thing in the world besides for a perfect righteousnesse.

Secondly, there is another charge deep indeed, and I appeal to you that have frequently heard me, whether ever you have heard any such thing from me; Namely, that by way of interence I should deny Christ, How true this is, let the whole course of my Ministery witnesse, which altogether aimed and endeavoured the exalting of Christ above all the creatures in the world, and except my being so busie with this truth be become an occasion of so manifest slanders and false aspersions that are raised, I know not what should be the cause of them. But, beloved, how is it, that I should deny Christ? In that, say they, I deny repentance unto life. Now, whether ever I did so, I appeal to you that heard me: This I say, concerning faith and repentance unto life, in brief that neither faith nor repentance hath any efficacy of their own to produce life, but those that attain to life, in time the Lord giveth them to beleeve and repent indeed.

But a third charge is more strange then all

the reſt, this I muſt touch alſo. I will name no perſons, nor hint them; but my ſcope is to deliver plainly unto you, the truth of my own thoughts, and ſo lie under cenſure, or be acquitted. The charge is this, that I ſhould affirm that an elect perſon ſhould live and die a whoremonger, and an adulterer; and in all kinde of prophaneneſſe; and, though living and dying in this kinde of prophaneneſſe, he ſhall be ſaved. Which, how contrary it is unto the whole courſe of my miniſtery, ye are witneſſe. I dare be bold to ſay, you all know it to be a groſſe, notorious, and groundleſſe ſlander. You know, concerning this thing; an elect perſon being an elect perſon, it is impoſſible that ſuch an one ſhould miſ-carry, and not be ſaved. He that is elected unto ſalvation, either Gods election muſt be fruſtrated, which is impoſſible, or this perſon muſt attain unto ſalvation. I think no man of thoſe that have caſt this imputation upon me will deny it; but withall, this I told before, and ſo I ſay ſtill. There is no elect perſon, ſuppoſe him to be capable, and come to years, ſhall die before he be called, that is, before the Lord give faith to this perſon to beleeve, and in ſome meaſure frame this elect perſon to walk by the Spirit according to the rule of the Spirit. In a word, this perſon is changed in converſation. The principle is this:

He

He that believeth shall be saved, and *he that believeth not shall be damned*: and, *No unclean thing shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven*; every soul therefore, being elected, as it shall be saved at last, so is it, or shall in time be called and inabled to believe and walk as a child of light. If this be not true doctrine, then I desire my mouth may be stopped.

Having thus endeavoured to take off those aspersions, though not in respect of my self; yet in respect of some of you, who peradventure may receive such things for truth, especially coming out of the mouths of such persons as those from whom the charge comes.

Now, to the Text that I have taken to my self to handle; namely, *Thou art all fair my Love, there is no spot in thee.* I shall say but little concerning this latter branch of the Text, it having been all my work heretofore to set forth this immunity we have by the blood of Christ, the cleansing from all sin. I shall keep my self to the former branch: *Thou art all fair my Love.* Let us therefore take into consideration these particulars, that will give some hint of the grace revealed here.

The first is, who this *Love* is, of whom Christ speaks.

Secondly, why this person that is so fair is here called *my Love.*

Thirdly, what this *fairness* is that is appropriated to the love of Christ.

Fourthly, what it is for the love of Christ to be *all fair*.

Fifthly, when this time is, that this love of Christ is all fair: *Thou art all fair my Love.*

I will begin here with the first; namely, who this is here, that is called the *Love* of Christ. The next words will unriddle the question, *Come with me from Lebanon my Spouse.* The love of Christ then here is the Spouse of Christ. And beloved, if you knew all, you would soon see what glorious, unspeakable and unsearchable excellencies are contained in this Grace, that the Church should be admitted into the bosome of Christ to be the very Spouse of Christ.

There are two things very considerable by which you may perceive at the least some of the glory and excellency of this priviledge, to be the Spouse of Christ.

First, if you consider the inequality of the persons that are matched.

Secondly, if you will consider the great priviledge that will issue from such a match as this is. The word *Spouse*, you know, is nothing else, but a title of relation, in reference to a Husband. Now, I say, first consider the inequality of the persons matched, and therein you shall see an admirable condescending and grace. I

remem-

remember, in the first book of *Samuel*, when the servants of *Saul* came to *David*, to make mention of *Sauls* mind concerning *Davids* marrying *Sauls* daughter, *David* was in a kind of astonishment, and amazement. And when they spake to him of the matter, *David* replied: *Seemeth it a light matter unto you, to be the kings son in law, seeing I am a poor man, and my father of a small house in* Israel. This was strange news to poor *David*; What? presently to marry the Kings daughter, and to be the son in law to a King, being a poor man as I am, is this a small matter in your eyes? Much more may we be astonished, that we poor miserable wretches should marry the son and heir of the world; nay, the Son and Heir of Glory. Shall this seem a light matter to you to be the Spouse of a King, to be the sons and daughters of the King of kings? It was an admirable witty expression of *Abigail* in the 25. Chapter of the first book of *Samuel*, vers. 41. when *David* sent messengers unto her, to commune with her, to take her to be his wife, *Abigail* in humility, replied to the messengers thus: *Let thy hand-maid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord*; a high strained complement, if it had been a meer complement: But it was reall, so it doth expresse the great distance she conceived there was between her self and *David*; and therefore

fore doth not spare to shew her thoughts of her great unworthiness to be matched with *David*: *Let thy hand-maid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord.* This is an office good enough for me, to wash the servants feet, and not to lie in the bosome of *David*; Why, what a great matter was this? She was as rich as *David* was; and (you may manifestly see,) she was very beautifull, and her stock and parentage was of as good a stock as *Davids*; There was but this difference, a kingdom was promised to *David*, and he was anointed king, but yet, for the present, a persecuted anointed; but yet, notwithstanding, she admires the great condescending of *David*, that he should take her to be his wife. Oh then, beloved, what must be the condescending of the Son of God, the Heir of the world, and the expresse Image of the Father, and the brightnesse of his glory, as you have it in the 3. verse of the first Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*; I say, for this great Heir, this mirror of Beauty, the brightnesse of the glory of the Father, to stoop to match himself to a creature; surely, I say it were a great condescending. But since he was so pleased to condescend so low, as to match himself to a creature, he might well have chosen the highest Image of the creatures, the highest and most noble stock of creatures, he might

might have matched himself with Angels, but this makes his condescent more admirable; he descended lower, he took not upon him, saith the Apostle, the nature of Angels, but the seed of *Abraham*. And, beloved, were it to creatures, and the lowest of creatures simply, the condescent had not been so great, there may be some beauty in a countrey maid, though homely attired, as well as there may be in a great personage in richest apparrell, being of great stock, and portion. Had there been beauty, though there had been no linage nor noble blood, this were something; but as this blood became ignoble and traiterous blood, in respect of the first fathers rebellions, and treason, so this traiterous blood could not contain it self within its bounds; but, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, *from the crown of the head, to the sole of the feet, there is nothing else but wounds, & bruises, swellings, and sours, and loathsomnesse in blood, even such a blood, as that person is cast out to the loathing of its person, that no eye can pity*: That Christ should take such a nasty beggar, such a beggar, as stinks above ground, as we may well say, in regard of its filthinesse, that hath no sound part, but being full of botches and soares, and putrifactions, running over all parts, from head to foot; I say, that Christ should take such a creature, and no place should serve this

creature

creature but his bosome, his bed; and no communion, no fellowship serve, but the neerest communion and fellowship that possible may or can be imagined, even a communion and fellowship that extends it self to a kind of onenesse, and highest degree of unity. Oh the astonishing greatnesse of the love of Christ! They are said to be one flesh, as Christ and his Church are set forth by the Holy Ghost, in the union between man and wife; so that, beloved, the Church as she is the Spouse of Christ, so she is made one flesh with Christ. You have some monstrous births in the world sometimes, that have had some deformed parts growing unto them, as you may see at this time in some place about this town, a young man with another youth, as I may say, united to him at his belly, whereby he is exceedingly deformed, and very much troubled with the burthen of it, and almost poisoned by the noysomnesse of it; whereby the life of him that bears it, becomes worse then death to him. Beloved, such were some of us; nay, such were all of us by nature, I, when Christ first took us we were such monsters, we were thus filthy, loathsome, nasty, ugly things. And though we were thus by nature; yet Christ hath admitted us, not onely into his house, and now and then into his presence, but to sit continually before him; yea, to be

be his Spouse: He makes *us flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*; what a condescending is this? It is true, beloved, Christ he covenants, and accordingly he hath done this; namely, cleansed this person, after he had coupled himself to this person: But, I say, to take persons before this change, to take them in such a loathsome abhorred filthy condition, and make them one with himself, is so strange a condescending, that all the world is not able to parallel it, shall I say? no, not come neer this act of Christ: A king may, peradventure, fancy some worthinesse, some beauty, something or other that may be pleasing to him in a beggar, and marry the beggar for that he fancieth to be of worth, and delight in her; but, beloved, how could Christ call his love on such persons, whom he knew were such filthy persons, when or when Christ came in the fulness of time and himself was to woo them, then they spit poyson in the face of Christ, being full of enmity, stubbornness and rebellion, even bitter enmitie against Christ, stinging from him as the greatest enemy in the world? Beloved, by nature, every person, till Christ himself tame that person, hath a spight against Christ, and fights against him, and is so full of malignity against him, as to cast dirt even in the face of Christ; and yet for all this inequality and disproportion between Christ

and

and the Spouse, Christ makes this person, this loathsome wretched person, this rebell and traitor, his Spouse.

Now, beloved, if the Lord will but open your spirits, to look into this inequality, and disproportion, and see not only the distance, but even the extream contrariety between Christ considered as he is in himself, and you in your selves, how can you but break forth into admiration and amazement, even to astonishment?

It was a notable expression of *John*, in the 1. Epist. Chap. 3. as I take it, vers. 1. *Behold*, saith he, *what manner of love this is, that the Father hath shewed unto us, that we should be called the Sons of God? Now we are the Sons of God; and yet doth it not yet appear what we shall be.* He begins with this note of admiration, *Behold*, and he follows it with an interrogation, as not being able to answer it himself: *What manner of love is this?* why, wherein expressed? *That we should be called the Sons of God.* This is a great love, and yet ye know that son-ship is a relation below a Spouse; How then should we break forth, if it were possible, into a higher admiration then ever *John* did, and say: *Behold, what a manner of love is this, that we, poor miserable creatures, should be called the Spouse of Christ! Now we are the Spouse of Christ; yet doth it not yet appear what we shall be.*

It remains we should consider, secondly, the priviledges of this relation, and therein see the great loving kindnesse and unsearchable goodnesse of our God, that is pleased to match his own Son unto us, and by such a match to make us partakers of such excellent and glorious priviledges and immunities. I will but name them:

First, as we are the Spouse of Christ, so we are the children of God; he that marrieth the kings daughter, becometh the kings son by that match: but that is not all.

Secondly, by this match we become heirs; if sons, then heirs, heirs of glory, co heirs, and joynt-heirs with Christ; a great priviledge, if you consider of all the wealth and riches you have by Christ.

Thirdly, this Spousship intitles the Spouse of Christ, to all that ever Christ hath; it intitles her to all the honours of Christ; it intitles her to all the communicable titles of Christ.

Fourthly, this Spousship secures the Church the Spouse of Christ, from all arrest, from actions, and all suits, let the debt be never so great, the creditors cannot come neer her for one farthing; I say, the consideration of this will adde also to the exalting and magnifying of the exceeding riches of the grace of God in Christ to men, to shew what a blessed condition this Spousship is to those that are strangers unto both;

both; hearing the *Love* of the Church to be the chieſeſt of ten thouſands, may by the power of the Spirit of the *Lord*, be won to ſeek after him; it was the very ſame caſe in the *Canticles*, The daughters of the world ſay unto the *Spouſe* of Chriſt, hearing her to extoll her love, What is thy beloved more then other beloveds, that thou chargeſt us? Oh, ſaith the Church, *My Beloved is White and ruddy; my beloved is the chiefeſt of ten thouſands*; now, when they had heard of the excellencies of Chriſt, they began at laſt to have their affections taken too, and to ſay, *Whither is thy Beloved gone, that we may ſeek him With thee?* Even ſo it may pleaſe God, when by my endeavour the excellencies of the priviledges of the Spouſe of Chriſt are ſet forth, and the gloriouſneſſe of the priviledges of the Goſpel manifeſted; I ſay, when theſe appear, and when Chriſt as the chief of ten thouſands, is declared, ſome may ſeek after him, yea, and imbrace him with joy. But I cannot ſtand now to ſpeak of them; but hereafter, God willing, if I ſhall have further opportunity.

SERMON

SERMON XI.

COLOSSIANS 1. 18.

And he is the head of his body the Church the beginning.

THE Apostle, after his superscription and direction of his Epistle, wherein he makes mention of his commission for the exercise of his Apostolicall office, and after his Apostolicall benediction given unto them, comes to give an account of the cause of the writing of this Epistle. It was this; namely, he had received comfortable intelligence and information from *Epaphroditus*, a Minister of the Gospel, that had laboured among these *Colossians* of their receiving the faith, and of their love to the brethren. This was glad news to the Apostle; and therefore he tells them, that he was not unmindfull or backward to return thanks and praise to the

Lord for so good a work begun in them, and for the joy he had received by the work among them, and also to pray for them, making mention of many particulars he sought of God on their behalf, namely, *That they may be filled with the knowledge of his wil in all wisdom and spirituall understanding*; closing up in thankfulness, in remembrance and rehersall of the fountain and rise from whence all that grace and goodnesse received, flowed and sprung, and that is the dear Son of God, in the 13. verse. Having thus let himself into his own way; namely, the mentioning of the dear Son of God; he takes the oppertunity from an apt connexion, to go on according to the main discourse of this Epistle, wherein the Apostle first sorts his materials, and then he falls upon his businesse. The two main matters he deals upon, are, first the foundation, and that is the Sonne of God, expressed in the 13. verse: Secondly, the structure raised upon this foundation, and that is redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Here is the distribution of his matter. Now, by and by, having sorted his materialls, he falls to work; beginning first with the foundation, which he polisheth, that he puts such a lustre upon it, that it shines even like the Sun; yea, more glorious then the Sun in beauty: He sets forth Christ the

the foundation, in so many aimable considerations, as to ravish the world. And the Apostle at the 15. and 16. verses, begins to shew his faculty and expertnesse in this great work, that Christ did entrust him withall; namely, to be a wooer in the behalf of Christ, to win people to him, as in a former discourse upon this place I have told you; and therein, I say, the Apostle doth most Rhetorically hold forth every thing that is of a winning and desirable nature to draw forth the love of people unto Christ. If people look for beauty, and that catch men, the Apostle tells us here, that Christ is an admirable peece of beauty, there is none like to him, saith the Church in the *Canticles: He is the chief of ten thousands*; but, behold, the beauty the Apostle mentions here: *He is the Image of the invisible God.* In the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, in the 1. chapter, and the 3. verse, he speaks more fully to the businesse: *He is the expresse Image of his person, and the brightnes of his glory.* Here is a face for you, if you be enamored with beauty, there is none like him. Yea, but some they look for parentage, one of Noble blood, and of a great House. As they would have beauty, so they would marry into an honourable Family. Well, the Apostle will tell you here is a match for you with a witnesse: Here is beauty, and a good race too. He is

not only the expresse Image of God, but he is the first born of God: *The first begotten of every creature*; nay, the dear Son of God. In the 15. verse of this chapter, here is a stock for you of the highest kindred in the world; hee is the heir of glory, the heir apparant, that if you will match for honour, if you will match into a great House, here is beauty and honour too. Yea, but you will say, it may be, he may be in disgrace, it may be he hath no authority and power, and ability; we would have one that hath authority and power, and bears rule. Christ, he is called such a one too; the whole soveraignty of the world is at his command and dispossall: as you would have it to be, so you have it, in the next verse. In vers. 16. *All things were made by him*, saith the Apostle, *whether things in heaven, or things in earth, visible, or invisible, principalities and powers, thrones or dominions, all things were made by him, & for him*, as much as to say, every thing is subject unto him, every thing bows their knees to him: And in 2 *Philip.* he hath a name given to him above every name; *that, at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, whether things in heaven, or things in earth, or things under the earth.* Tell me one that hath greater power and authority then this is. If you will therefore match with advantage to the purpose, here is a match for you, saith the

Apostle

Apostle. I, but some will say, He may have honour enough himself, but it may be he is a niggard, I may be kept hard enough, and poore enough; Is he bountifull and free? Beloved, the Apostle tells us in *Colos.* 2. 10. First, what he hath; he is not only honourable, but rich also: *In him dwelleth the fulnes of the Godhead bodily*, saith he. What is that to me, some will say, he may hoard it all up, I may have little enough of it. No, saith the Apostle, *we are compleat in him.* Here is the fulnes of the Godhead, and ye are compleat in him; he cannot abide to keep any thing to himself: In this he is a Housholder with a witnesse; he cannot eat his morsels alone, he must impart that he hath. The tender mother, if she have but a bit, the childe must have half with her, and participate thereof. And therefore, in the 1. of *John*, he is *full of grace and truth*, saith the Holy Ghost, *and of his fulnes We have received grace for grace.* What better Husband can you desire in the world, then to have his whole purse at your command? You are not at stint and allowance, you may draw till you are weary, there is no shutting up of the chest of his treasure; he is a Fountain set open for you.

But to draw towards our purpose: There are two offices the Holy Ghost is pleased to acquaint us withall, proper unto Christ as an en-

couragement to win people unto him. The first is generall, in respect of creation and providence over the whole world; the second is peculiar and speciall, over the Church alone, that is the office mentioned in the Text: *He is the head of the body, the Church the beginning.*

In the words you may observe with me, a Proposition, and an Eposition, and Interpretation; or an Allegoricall Proposition, and the exposition of the Allegory.

The Allegoricall Proposition is, *He is the head of the body.*

The interpretation of it is, *He is the beginning of the Church.*

In the words, note whose office this is, that is here spoken of; it is he that is the Head, even the Image of the invisible God, the deare Son of God.

Secondly, note the office it self, what that is. It is *Headship; He is the Head of the Church; He is the beginning.*

Thirdly, note among whom this office is executed, and for whose use he doth execute this office, that is, the *body*, interpreted to be the Church, the severall members of Christ. I will not set down any other Proposition, but what the Apostle hath stated in the Text, using his own words, *Christ is the head of the body, the Church the beginning.* A head, and so consequently

quently a body, admits of a threefold consideration: Sometimes it is taken naturally, and so proportionably it hath a body consisting of naturall members. Sometimes a head is taken politically, and so proportionably it hath a body politique. But here it is taken spiritually for a spirituall head, and a spirituall body: Christ is the head, and the Church you see, is the body, so that this is here a mysticall body. And the Church is called a body, not that it hath a compleatnesse without a head; but in reference to the head, it is called a part of the whole. A body and a head is but a compleat body indeed. Sometimes the body goes for a part, and sometimes for the whole. Here it is taken for a part only: But that we are to insist upon is this.

First, to take into consideration, who this is that is the head.

Secondly, what this office of Headship doth import unto us.

Thirdly, how this Head is furnished to the office that is proper for a head to a body.

Fourthly, and then, as time will give leave, we will have a word or two of application.

First, who this Head is; You will say, we need not ask the question, it is confest by all it is Christ. It is true, it is so; but yet there is a mystery in it, and peradventure, the thoughts

of many persons are sometimes more confused in the apprehension of Christ, as he is Head, then haply they might be. And it may be there might be a more cleer apprehension of Christ considered as he is Head, then yet there is among us. I will therefore as cleerly as possibly I may, state unto you, under what consideration Christ is to be considered, being head of his Church, or of his members. Note, for the making way to this, that there are five very distinct things in Christ; I say, all five distinct one from another, and all of them, as you shall hear in the closure, concurre together in Christ as head of the Church.

First, in Christ there is the one only divine nature and Godhead; there is no God in the world, but the God that Christ is: This is worth your consideration, for the minds of men are apt, frequently to distinguish so between God and Christ, as if God were one, and Christ distinctly another from God; when as the truth is, there is no other God in the world, but what Christ himself is: *My Lord and my God*, said *Thomas*, speaking to Christ. And in the 2. chap. of this Epistle to the *Colossians*, vers. 9. the Apostle saith thus, *In him dwels the fulnes of the Godhead bodily*: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* In the 1. chapter of *John*,

John: and the 1. verſ. Chriſt is God, there is but one God in all the world, and therefore you muſt know, that you are never to ſeparate in your thoughts God from Chriſt. Alwaies as you look upon Chriſt, ſo look upon God; or, as you look upon God, look upon God no otherwiſe then as he is in Chriſt, as if there were another God, beſides what Chriſt is; for there is no ſuch thing.

Secondly, beſides the Godhead, there is the eternall, ineffable perſonality in Chriſt, as he is God, ſo he is the Son. And in this, though we cannot fathome the difference, yet certainly there is a perſonall difference between the Fatherhood and the perſon of the Son: There is but one God, as I ſaid before, but the perſons are three; the Father is one, the Son is another, and the Holy Ghoſt is another: *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, and theſe three are one.* Now, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghoſt, are not all one perſonally, but the Son is the Son, and the Father is the Father. But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son is one, that is the true meaning; there is a difference between the perſon of the Father, and the perſon of the Son; but this matter is not to be pryed into by humane wit: For this of all the myſteries in Scripture, is the pure

object

object of meer faith; there is no humane way to illustrate the difference between the eternall Fatherhood and the eternall Sonship.

Thirdly, in Christ there is a distinct humane nature, that is, as this man is not that man, such a distinct individuall human nature Christ hath, having a peculiar soul and body of his own; that which was born of the Virgin *Mary*, and suffered upon the crosse: distinct, I say, from our individuall souls and bodies.

Fourthly, in Christ there is to be considered an ineffable and incomprehensible hypostaticall Vnion of the divine nature of the second person in the Trinity, and humane nature in one person. There is difference between the being of God, and man, considered severally, and the being of Christ as Mediator. The Godhead of Christ is not the Mediator simply; the Manhood of Christ is not the Mediator simply considered: But God and man in one person, as we call it, is the Mediator.

Finally, Christ is to be considered not only personally, as he is God and man, being one individuall person by himself; but Christ is to be considered collectively, that is, he is not only Christ as he is one person of himself; but he is Christ, as he himself in that one person is united to the persons of all the elect in the world. He and they make up but one collective body.

In

In brief, there is a kinde of trin-union in Christ, The divine union which makes the Father and the Son one. The personall union, which makes the divine nature, and the humane nature one. The mysticall union which makes Christ the Mediator, God and man, one with all the members of Christ joyntly. You know, that in respect of the last consideration, Christ, as he is collectively considered, consists of his own person as head, and of all the elect as members; so that in some sense Christ cannot be said to be separated, but hath his members knit unto him. A headlesse body, or a bodylesse head, are equally both of them imperfect. If the Church be separated from Christ, or Christ separated from the Church, he should in the last consideration be imperfect. Now in this Text, the Apostle speaking of Christ, doth understand him in the last consideration I have spoken of; namely, as God the Son united to the humane nature, or rather uniting the humane nature unto himself; as these two natures in one person are united unto the Church or members of Christ; so Christ is the head. It is true, sometimes you have expressions of Christs own speaking, by way of subjection: *My Father is greater then I:* And, *I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me*; which phrase of Christ, being not rightly

rightly understood, doth occasion in the thoughts of men, some conceits, as if God were a distinct being from Christ; that Christ makes God here greater then himself, whereas the truth is, there is, as I said before, no God but what Christ is. Christ doth never acknowledge that the Godhead of his Father is greater then his own Godhead: For, the Father and the Sonne is but one in the Godhead and divine nature; and therefore, when Christ in his speech hath reference unto God, he hath but reference unto the divine nature that is united unto his humanity, and the very nature of God is within himself; and there is no other but what is within himself. Therefore there is no distinct God in the world, but that God that is become man, and is now called Christ. Therefore you are never to look upon Christ, but as he is the compleat only true God. What need all this discourse, you will say? I answer, You must have Christ set forth in this consideration, or else you shall never be able to reach that he is the head. Therefore the consideration of the second thing will clear the usefulness of the first. What this Headship is the Text saith: *He is the beginning*, that is, the root and spring from whence things have their first being. Now, mark, beloved, either the Apostle must speake false, when

when he saith, he is *the beginning*; or else you must consider Christ, as the only God. All the world grants God to be the beginning of all things; therefore, if there be any thing in the world that should be the beginning of being besides Christ, he himself cannot be the beginning of all things; therefore for the maintenance of this prerogative of Christ *being the beginning* and fountain, he is to be considered alwayes as the only God. Now, this word, *beginning*, doth import unto us, that Christ is first the beginning of being: and secondly, the beginning of well being: He is the beginning of being in generall; *All things were made by him, and without him there was nothing made that was made*, John the 1. As here in this 1. of the *Colos. All things were created by him, whether visible or invisible: principalities & powers, thrones or dominions.*

The main thing the Apostle drives at, is this: that Christ is the beginning of the Church, that is, Christ is the beginning of them being members of himself. Every member of the Church of Christ received his first being from him, and only from him, and from none other. Consider the originall beginning of them, even in eternity it self, if it may be properly called a beginning, it hath its being from Christ himself. Mark the Apostle in the 1. chapter of the

Epistle

Epistle to the *Ephesians*, 2. and 3. verses: *Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spirituall blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundations of the world were laid.* This expression may seem to some, to import a difference between God and Christ or something distinct one from the other, as if Christ were the subject in whom persons are chosen, and God the Author, by whom persons are chosen. But, beloved, properly there is no such thing as Christ distinct from God, so as if he were not God. If God be in Christ, then it is Christ himself, as he is God that doth it. And therefore, if you will mark the expression well, it may be, you shall see that it is Christ himself hath chosen us. I confesse, the words may have a double reference, either to the Father, or to Christ; and according to this second reference, Christ may be conceived both the object, and the fountain too, in whom you are chosen; and the expression, perhaps, will bear both: *According as he hath chosen us in him*; that is, according as he in him chose us. But howsoever, all comes to one effect, the Father and the Son being one God.

Secondly, to come down to particulars: Christ is the beginning of a present possessive being,

being, as persons are members of him. He is the beginning of a possessive being, or being in possession. Consider the first thing in the being of a member, that is life; life, as it is spirituall, and so peculiar to a member, hath its first rise from Christ himself: mark the expression in the 2. chapter of the Epistle to the *Ephesians*; *He hath created us in Christ Jesus, unto good works, wherein he hath ordained us, that we should walk in them.* You are created of God in Christ Jesus to good works: or, God in Christ hath done it. The very self-same phrase and expression that the Apostle useth there to the *Ephesians*, he useth again in the 2. Epistle to the *Corinthians*, chap. 5. and verse 19. Namely, that *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.* The truth is, It pleased the divine nature to unite the humane nature to it self, and so to mannage the affairs of the Church in those two natures so united; not as if God gave out some of himself to the humane nature, and reserved some of it self to it self; but the whole divine nature gave up it self, though only in the second Person: *God was in Christ*, as much as to say, whole God, the divine nature assumed a humane nature, and so makes up a Christ. And thus God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself: You shall see in the Apostles expression elsewhere, that the beginning

beginning of life in a member of Christ flows from Christ: *Your life is hid with Christ in God.* It is such another phrase as the two former: *It is hid with Christ in God*; that is, it is hid in that God, who by being man, is become Christ: For that is all the difference, between God and Christ; all the difference, I say, is between God simply and absolutely considered in himself, and God considered as ineffably united to the humane nature. God, I say, thus united, becomes Christ; and so in such a union is reconciling the world unto himself, and takes the Church, who is his body. The Apostle tells us further, *Now I live*, but he presently checks himself; *yet not I, but Christ lives in me.* Christ is the soul of the body, and as the body without a soul is dead, so a person without Christ is dead.

I will not dispute that needless dispute of the Philosophers, whether the soul be seated in the head principally, or in the heart, but this I am sure of, the life and soul of the Church is in the head of the Church: *I am the way, the truth and the life*; he is the life of the soul of man: as the body without the soul is dead; even so, if there could be such a thing, as the body of the Church without Christ, that body were but a dead thing. It hath all animal vertue from him alone: It hath all life in

in all respects from him. Take life in the first fruits, in its sence or motion, all spirituall sence, all spirituall motion, all spirituall actions, and activenesse for action, receives being and beginning only from Christ: *Hee is given for a covenant to open the blind eyes.* All eyes are blind till Christ opens them; there is no seeing till the body receive sight and seeing from the head. The head causeth us also to smell; as wel as to see, the sweet savour of the ointment of Christ, that makes the Virgins love him: *Because of the sweet savour of thy oyntments, therefore do the Virgins love thee.* Now, this savour, the smell thereof, being as the smel of a field that the Lord hath blessed, to smel this, is the sole work of Christ himselfe: So also the spiritual taste, to tast how good God is, to relish the fatnesse, and marrow, and sweetnesse of the spirituall wine well refined upon the lees, is all by the power of Christ, and hath its being from Christ: So all our feeling, to feel comfort, joy unspeakable, and glorious, all is from Christ; Christ opens our eyes, he boars the eares, he causeth us to smell.

You will say, all this is the worke of the Spirit; why doe you say it is the work of Christ? Mark what *John* saith in the 16. chapter, the words are these: *He*, that is, *the spirit shal glorifie me: For he shall receive of mine, and he shall*

shew it unto you. The Spirit himselfe, as he dealeth with the members of Christ, is the agent of Christ proceeding from Christ, communicating that that is Christs to those members. So that the Spirit is, as it were, the conduit-pipe, through whom the fulnesse of the fountaine conveyes it selfe, and runs forth to every member. The Spirit is as the veins and nerves in the naturall body. The blood, you know, hath its fountain from the liver: but the veins carry it into every part of the body: And as the naturall eye cannot see, except the nerves feed it with visive spirits; so neither can any eye behold the secrets of the Lord, the hidden things of Christ, such as he thanks his Father, hee reveales unto babes, while he hides them from the wise of the world, except the Lord Christ do feed the members with his own Spirit. It is not the eye that doth discerne and see of it selfe, but the spirits that do come from the head, cause sight by the eye: For there may be an eye, and no sight; where a want of these spirits are. Looke over all the Book of God, and you shall finde, that there is no action that comes from the Spirit, but Christ is the head and spring of it. You shall finde the strength and hearts of people faile when hee withdrawes himselfe. It is hee that is the strength of them for ever: *Feare not*, saith the Text,

Text, *be not diſmayed; I will uphold thee, I will ſtrengthen thee.* There muſt needs be miſcarriage for want of power, except Chriſt come with his ſtrength and power to uphold. Therefore, when *Paul* exhorts thoſe to whom he writes, to worke the workes of the Lord, hee gives them this counſel: *Be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*: and again, ſaith hee, *Put on the whole armour of God.* Now it is a vain thing to think of taking up of arms, except there be ſtrength to manage them. *Saul* thought *David* to be a puny, when he was to fight with *Goliah*, and had no regard to him, although hee might have good armour on; hee was too little a man; What *Saul* thought of *David*, is true of all the whole armour of God, it is to no purpoſe, except men be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. And therefore, when *Paul* was in a ſtrait, hee begged, and begged again, to have ſtrength given, though hee had not an anſwer to his mind, yet God told him: *My grace is ſufficient for thee*; *My ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſſe.* All perſons are weak, but as they have ſtrength in Chriſt. Yea, there is no ſtrength but what is his, and is ſent by him. Let me tell you this, and I beſeech you conſider, they that have Chriſt for their head, they have an infinite advantage above the cloſeſt

hypocrite in the world, although he goe never so farre: All he doth is but from a weake principle; Christ is not the principle of that hee doth: but hee that hath Christ for his head, hee hath a spring of fulnesse. The Holy Ghost tells us; *He is full of Grace and Truth*; and, *in him dwells the fulnesse of the God-head bodily*: and, *It pleased the Father, that in him all fulnesse should dwell*: So that you may plainely see, that the preaching of Christ as head, and setting up of all the glory of Christ, is not the preaching of licentious liberty to men. Hee that can win a person to be a true member of this head, that is Christ, hee brings that person into a fat soile; hee transplants him from a barren soile, from a rocky soil, into a rich soile; whereby he come to abound in all manner of fruitfulnesse. And certainly, beloved, fruitfulnesse will be more abundant, as the soule can apprehend it selfe by true faith to be a part of this head: For, the head will communicate that the soule it selfe cannot contain it selfe in its own bounds: *The love of Christ constraines me* saith *Paul*, hee can doe no otherwise; hee that is driven must needs goe: Christ he drives, and makes himselfe a way into his members; hee breakes his own way into them, and so sets them on, and puts them forwards.

Then

Then again, Christ being the beginning of all our being, he is the beginning also of all prerogatives & priviledges whatsoever the Church of Christ hath; they have no priviledge but as it flows from the grant of Christ: As first of all, Justification; even Justification it selfe comes from Christ.

It may be that you will object, that the Text saith, that *God justifies the ungodly*, and how then doth Christ justifie them?

I say still as I said before: That which God doth, Christ doth; God is still in Christ; God doth nothing, but Christ doth all things. All the Father hath, he hath given to the Son: *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son.* The meaning, I take it, is this: God, as hee is simply one divine essence in himself, he doth in this simple consideration of himself, not manage any thing in this kind: but all that ever he manageth, he manageth in his Son; and this Son, as he is become man. So that whosoever they are that are justified, they are justified by the Sonne; and whosoever come to the knowledge of Justification, they attaine to the knowledg of Justification also by Christ: *We have not received the spirit of the world, but wee have received the Spirit that is of God; that wee may know the things that are freely given us of God.* Now, this Spirit of

God, is the Spirit of Christ: So then, the knowledge of the things freely given us of God, is by the Spirit of Christ. Nothing can acquaint the soule, and satisfie it of a portion and interest in Christ, and being a member of Christ, but by the Spirit of God; that must resolve the case at last, do what you can. Every thing is dumb and silent: but as the Spirit of God doth speak. The Word of God, and even the word of grace, is a dumb letter, but as the Spirit of the Lord doth speak in it, or with it; and so of all things in the world. And therefore, beloved, know, you run into those two great evills the Holy Ghost speakes of in *Jeremiah*; the forsaking *the fountaine of living water*, and, *the digging to your selves cisterns that can hold no water*; while you forsake Christ the spring & fountain, and go to pump and fetch any thing you take from any thing besides him: If you run to creatures, you make not Christ the beginning.

You will say, you suppose Christ to be the beginning in all, and you believe him so to be. But, I say, Is this a good supposition of Christ, when he is not thought of, shall he be but supposed? and shall services be set up to take up all the affections, and all the suits and pleadings of your hearts? How hath Christ all the priority? In the 18. verse of the 1. chapter

ter to the *Colossians*, hee is said to be the head of the body of the Church: *That hee might have the pre-eminence in all things.* Why do people then run to other things, and magnifie, and extoll, and exalt other things, while Christ shall not have a good word? Nay, people are affraid to speake out of things that are Christs, for fear of giving liberty to people to sin, and charge people to take heed of the setting forth of Christ and Grace by him, as a dangerous Doctrine: So seldome daring to speake of the excellencies of Christ, and of the excellent priviledges and benefits that come by and from Christ; nor of the freenesse of those things that are conveyed to us, in, and through Christ. And why? Oh! this will make men run out into all manner of licentiousnesse and propinanesse, without controll; and so Christ shall be suppressed, for feare of giving liberty, and in the meane while other things shall bee set up above Christ: the divine Rhetorick of Repentance, and Humiliation; the prevalency of teares to wash away sin, and our conscionable walking will commend us to GOD at the last day. Here must bee a magnifying of mans righteousnesse, and when these things come to be examined, they are but rhetoricall expressions. Beloved, God grant that our Rhetorick may advance him,

that is to bee advanced, and keepe all other things in their own places, that are to be kept low, that nothing may have the preeminence of Christ, Christ being the head and the beginning of all things; that the people of God may go with their buckets to the wells of salvation, and draw waters of life from thence, and not runne to muddy puddles. The zeale of the Lord, I meane of the Lord Christ, who hath so magnified the riches of his grace to the Sons of men, should eat up your spirits, & raise up your soules against every thing that doth raise it selfe up, to exalt it selfe above Christ. If Christ be not the beginning, but somthing else, let that have the preeminence; but if Christ be the beginning, let him have the preeminence: as *Eliah* once said to the Idolatrous *Israelites* that had forsaken the Lord, & had set up the works of their own hands instead of him; *If Baal be God, then worship him; but if God be God, then serve and worship him:* So I say, at this present unto you: If you will acknowledge Christ to be the beginning, let it appear in the setting of him up above all other things in your hearts and thoughts. Make him your sanctuary, make him your refuge, wait upon him for all things. Why are your hearts so cast downe? It may be corruptions prevail within you; fear not, Is not there enough in the fountaine to refresh

thee,

thee, and supply thee with strength against them? Doth Satan seek to overcome you by his temptations, & like a roaring Lion, seek to devour you? he is able to tread down Satan under your feet. Beloved, will you starve in a Cooks shop, as they say? Is there such plenty in *Christ*, & will you perish for hunger? You wil answer, it may be, you would close with Christ, you would goe to Christ for supply with all your hearts, but you dare not, you are afraid Christ will reject you, if you come to him. Beloved, come to Christ, & Christ will not cast you off. Is there any thing in the world you would have? would you have joy and peace? come to him, and the God of peace wil fil you with all peace and joy in believing. Would you have your iniquities subdued? come to him, and sin shall not have dominion over you, saith the Apostle: for, *Ye are not under the Law, but under Grace*: For it is the grace of God that brings salvation: salvation from sin, as wel as salvation from wrath: And, *this Grace of God*, saith the Apostle, *will teach you to deny all ungodlinesse, and worldly lusts*. There is no greater motive in the world to encourage man to venture upon any thing that Christ puts him upon then this; That he hath Christ to inable and to lead him through it. In the mean time give me leave to put one caution to you: Christ, I say, being the head

head, and as the head being the beginning, the supplier of all things pertaining to life & godlinesse; if there bee any person that either now, or at any other time make these most desperate conclusions from any thing that they have heard, as that they may continue in sin, and that they may go on in iniquity, Christ hath dyed for them, let them sin as much as they can, they cannot out-sin the death of Christ. If there be any person that doe charge any such untruth upon any Minister, and will collect such blasphemies from the Doctrine of the Gospel of Christ, let them know, that God will either bring them to see the greatnes of their folly, & to be ashamed of it; or, for ought I know, they may have their deserved portion in the lowest part of hell. I dare be bold to say, there is no people under heaven, who are so prejudiciall to the Gospel of Christ, as such stumbling blocks are; nor unto trembling hearts that would fain close with the free grace of God in Christ, as such persons that take liberty to sin, that grace may abound, causing the Gospel to be evill spoken of, and detested, causing that scandalous name to be raised upon the Gospel, that it is a doctrine of liberty. Beloved, as hee that hath called you is holy; so you that are called, be ye holy in all manner of conversation; and for he that hath called you, will make you holy and he is holy.

Fir

First, in a word, here is matter of exhortation; if Christ be the head and the beginning of all things, look up to the head, suck at the head, draw from the head, let nothing draw you from the head.

2ly. Here is matter of consolation to all the members of Christ, as long as the head hath in itself, the body shall never want. Such a head Christ is, that hath al fulnes in him, he can neither be drawn dry; Christ is not as the springs *Job* speaks of, brooks that fail in summer, but his spring is of such an excellent nature, that he makes an everlasting spring in the heart, whereto he pours himself: so saith he, *He that drinketh of the waters that I will give him, shall never thirst again, but the waters shall be in him a well*, with Christ, *bubling up unto eternall life.* Know assuredly, & be confident of it, God must cease to be God, before there can be a lack of supply of what is useful for you. Christ is head, & as he head, he is God as wel as man. God himself in grace must be drawn dry, before you shal want any thing that is good for you. Therfore let Satan & all the world set themselves against you, you shall never have cause to fly, all the springs are dried up, now there is no hope of any more supply; for certainly the Lord will maintain & continue that which he hath undertaken: *I am the Lord and change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

FINIS.